

Team Gibbs' Car Crash  
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Summary: The team gets in an accident. how badly are they hurt? Find out here.

### 1. Team Time

The team was going through cold cases. They had been for three hours. It was shaping up to be a long day. Gibbs leaned back and saw McGee rub his eyes. He had been staring at his computer for too long. DiNozzo was staring into nothing. Bishop was staring at her computer and listening to music. It was almost noon and they were getting hungry. Gibbs threw a pen in her direction to get her attention. Everyone looked up in question.

He smirked, "Who wants lunch? I don't know 'bout you but I'm hungry." They all smiled back.

"Very hungry!" Tony said.

"When aren't you?" asked McGee. Tony rolled his eyes with a smile.

"What do you have in mind, Gibbs?" asked Bishop.

"How about my diner? You haven't been there yet Bish."

"Oh, boss there pancakes are so-oh, good!" Gibbs laughed slightly at Tony's joy.

"Yeah, we all could use a brake." announced McGee.

"Yeah, Gibbs that sounds really good." agreed Bishop.

"Let's go, I'll drive."

They stood up and headed for the elevator. They left the building

going for Gibbs truck. They arrived at the diner and walked in. they took Gibbs regular booth. Elaine walked up. Gibbs stood up and hugged her. He sat back down and she kissed his forehead. To everyone's amusement, including Gibbs.

She approached their table. "I grabbed you the pot of coffee."

"I love ya Lainey." He laughed as she set it down., taking a gulp after filling his cup.

Everyone looked shocked as he allowed her to muck up his hair saying, "Just waitin' on that proposal, honey." He snorted back at her.

She put her hand on Gibbs' shoulder and asked, "You're regular lunch, sugar? Homemade white bread turkey, chicken, lettuce and cheddar sandwich, fries, and a pickle. "

"Ya know me so well, Lainey." He smiled up at her. She handed them all a coffee.

"Here's sugar and cream, I know how Gibbs likes his coffee." Laughing at their playful winces.

"Stronger is better!" Gibbs said.

She looked to Tony, "What ya want hon?"

"Chicken noodle soup, turkey cheddar and American cheese sub, and a bowl of fruit."

"What about you handsome?" she asked McGee.

"Turkey cheddar sub, a regular chef salad, and fries,"

"What will you have sweetie?" she asked Bishop.

"Chicken broccoli cheese soup, grilled cheese, fries, a pickle and a side chef salad." she answered.

Chuckles, "She hasn't eaten in a week." The team shared a laughed.

"Know I know when you're joking, but a blind person could see that you take care of yours." She laughed.

"Dame strait." She patted his arm and went to get their food ordered.

"You know her well, Gibbs?" Bishop asked Gibbs.

"Been going here for just over two decades." He answered Bishop as Elain came back.

She left to get their food, serving it a few minutes later.

"You need anything else?" they shook their heads.

"We're good, thanks Lainey" they smiled at him.

"Well, what ya waitin' for, dig in guys." said Gibbs. They all dug

in, laughing and joking with each other. They we're having a blast. They could relax without having to work on cold cases.

"Feels good to get away from the cold cases, I thought I would go blind from my computer screen." joked Bishop.

"Yeah I thought mine would pop out from staring at the files."

"Same." said Gibbs.

"Why are they so boring to work with?" Tony asked rhetorically.

A few minutes later they were sitting in comfortable silence. They we're simply enjoying each other. They had fun being in each other's presences.

Gibbs looked at his watch, "We better go, Vance only gave us an hour to eat."

They were heading back to the navy yard. Tony was driving for once, he had the radio on. Bishop sat behind him, while, McGee was in the middle of the back.

"Didn't know you had good taste in music, DiNozzo" Gibbs joked.

"And I didn't know you liked rock boss." He said back in a half question.

"Oh, yeah Guns &Roses, Poison, White Snake lots of good stuff."

"True that, what a 'bout you Bishop you like Rock and roll?" McGee replied.

Ellie smiled and nodded, "oh yeah, you can't beat old fashioned."

"Now that has soul to it Bishop" Gibbs replied. They sat in comfortable silence for a while. They were all happy to just enjoy the silence. His team would always be more than that. They are a family first. They keep each other stable and balanced.

## 2. Accident

Gibbs slightly reclined his seat at a 30 degree angle, to relax some. Tony stopped at a red light. When it turned green he started to go. Only another car didn't stop. The driver was texting when he looked up he was only a few feet away. He hit Gibbs side, at an angle. he hit him on from the front right, missing everyone else. Tony hit the airbag with his chest. McGee's braced his head when they started spinning like everyone else. Bishop hit her head on the window but not hard enough to cause a concussion, just a slight cut and bruise. They started spinning throwing them the other way, into oncoming traffic. They were hit on the side right across Gibbs door. They spun to the other side hitting the guardrail in the back right. They came to a slow screeching halt. Everyone started sitting up.

"Tim, Bish., Gibbs, ya alright?" asked Tony.

"Yeah Tony I'm good." said Bishop.

"Me, too." replied McGee.

"Boss?" asked McGee. They had trouble seeing him and Tony's neck hurt slightly so he tried not to move it. Gibbs groaned slightly but it was hardly audible.

"Gibbs you alright?" Bishop asked a few seconds later.

They shared a concerned look as he shifted but stilled. They looked over and saw the dash board wrapped around his ribcage. His arm caught between the door and dash. He was pushed into the set. His forehead was bleeding slightly from a piece of glass that cut him. His breathing restricted, fast, and shallow from the dash.

"Boss, can you wake up for me?" Tony said gently but urgently. Gibbs groaned little louder.

"Gibbs, we need you to wake up!" Bishop said a little louder. His eyes started to slightly flutter but didn't open.

"That's it Boss open your eyes." McGee said in a normal voice.

He opened his eyes slowly. He blinked a few times. He tried to shift to ease the pressure, only to have to bite his lip and press his head into the headrest, in pain. He opened his eyes and daily looked around.

"Y'all okay?" he asked in a raspy barely audible voice.

"Yeah, Gibbs were all fine, we were only hit on your side. I hit my head but no bumps or concussion."

"I was saved by the airbag."

"And I braced myself, Boss; you're the only one hurt."

"Good, that's real good." He grunted out.

He went to take a normal breath. His breath hitched in his throat and he couldn't restrain the loud groan. He squeezed his eyes closed. Tony placed his hand on his left shoulder. He winced and took a cautionary small breath.

"Easy, Gibbs small breaths" Bishop said. Gibbs nodded slightly his eyes still pinched.

"Boss, do you think we should lay you back some relieve the pressure?" McGee gently asked.

They waited a pause before Gibbs almost unnoticeably shook his head.

"Don't m-move me." He said in a strained voice.

"Okayâ€¦okay, it's alright. We won't move you, promise." Tony said. He saw Gibbs' hand clench and unclench, and grabbed it.

"Squeeze my hand boss. Let me try to help, even just as support." He asked. Gibbs did as was told.

"I'm Gonna call the ambulance, again see where they are." McGee said.

"W-why don' you t-try and get ou-out, so you can c-check the other guy."

"Alright McGee and Bishop will, I'll stay. Just focus on breathing and let me lead, Alright?" Gibbs just nodded letting him take the lead. After checking the other guy, Bishop and McGee came back and sat in the car.

"He was in a truck, only has a cut to his cheek." McGee announced. Gibbs nodded, barely conscious.

"Hey boss, stay with us" Tony all but begged.

"T-try-yingâ€|Nozzo" he said weakly. He coughed slightly, barely holding back a scream.

"You can scream if you want, Gibbs" said a worried Bishop.

"You're in excruciating pain. I mean you have to be, boss. It doesn't make you weak, promise." said McGee. Tony squeezed his hand. They were relieved when Gibbs nodded. His breathe was hitching too bad to speak.

"Just try and breathe easy, boss. Trust me on this one." Tony said looking him in the eyes. He nodded back. "Come on in through the nose, out through the mouth." Gibbs did as was suggested.

"Don't worry Gibbs the ambulance is only five, ten minutes away." Bishop announced.

"Yeah, boss, as impossible as it feels try and relax." Gibbs tried but was in too much pain.

"Boss, what do you think your injuries are?" Tony asked a few minutes later trying to keep him talking.

"C-crackedâ€|andâ€|Broke-ken ribsâ€|punct-ctured lungâ€|.crack-cked col-lar boneâ€|possible broke-ken arm." He barely managed to gasp out in a weak voice.

"Alright, we got ya boss, we got ya." Tony said.

"Tony put your chair down." He raised his eyebrow but did anyway.

He sat by the steering wheel and she sat next to him. McGee scooted so Gibbs could see them all, Tony kept his hand in his. McGee put his on Gibbs good left shoulder, and Bishop had his wrist and bicep. He was panting and sweaty. He couldn't get a full breath because of the dash board. They came out raspy and more of a gasp on the out breathes. His eyes started to droop.

"Heyâ€|hey boss, stay with us." Tony said and Gibbs blearily opened his eyes.

"It's okay Gibbs. You'll be fine." He nodded weakly almost unnoticeably. He coughed weakly and moaned.

"Easyâ€|take it easy." said McGee, "Yeah, we got you, Gibbs" said Tony. Bishop squeezed his arm in support. "Stay with us." she said. They said at once. He nodded back.

He cleared his throat, "Y-you alw-waysâ€|said my driv-vingâ€|would ca...catch upâ€|to me."

"Yeah, but you weren't driving." Tony pointed out.

"The one t-timeâ€|I don-n't dri-ive?" he raised an eyebrow, "Coin-incide-dence?"

They all laughed, "We know how you feel 'bout those Gibbs." stated Bishop. Gibbs smiled as they waited for help.

### 3. Help Arrives

The ambulance, firetrucks, and police arrived a few minutes later. The firefighters approached them on Tony's side. He rolled the window down.

"We're gonna have to use the Jaws of Life. We need you three to stay in the vehicle, to support him and keep him still." He said. The others nodded their agreement.

"Hey, boss we'll have ya out in no time." After he nodded he stepped back but they all remained in his sight.

They started to use the Jaws to pull the door open. He screamed and they thought he passed out, until he opened them. He looked for towards them. They maintained eye contact. They did for the entire time; they would still be there when Gibbs opened his eyes, after closing them in a wince. For the third times five minutes after they started trying to pry the door away, Gibbs eyes opened again, he was hardly breathing.

He said something for the first time. "S-Stop forâ€|a Sec." they did waiting for his slight nod three minutes later. They started prying and he screamed again, pushing his head back. They squeezed his shoulder, arm, and hand, in silent support. They were pulling on the door for three minutes before he ran out of oxygen to scream on and off with each pull. He just panted in horrible pain. The three of them were near tears. They went on like this for a total of fifteen minutes before the door was free.

The firefighters cursed, "He's too close to the dash, and we have to do this again. We're gonna give him a minute to regroup." Gibbs was to dazed to follow his surroundings but was not quit unconscious.

"Okay, we'll stay with him, we'll keep him awake." They nodded and got heavier duty machinery.

They used bigger jaws. He would scream from the pain. However, soon the pressure started to fade ever so slightly. He squeezed Tony's hand trying to get control over his pain. It was overwhelming

him.

"Boss, squeeze as hard as you can." Tony all but demanded. He did.

"Not w-work-king, s-stopâ€|j-just a minâ€|minute." They did as his raspy strained voice asked.

After thirty minutes they finally got him out and strapped onto a stretcher. His hands were resting on his thighs. His head back and his opened a crack. They angled the head of the stretcher, to help him breath. His breathing was raspy, pained, and shallow. The straps were around his shoulders, elbows, knees, and ankles.

"We have to put a breathing tube in." Tony replied, "We figured."

They squeezed his arm in the same places as they had in the car put a breathing tube. The straps were around his shoulders, elbows, knees, and ankles. The one on his shoulders were slightly higher and the elbows lower to keep them of his ribs. They loaded him in the ambulance, they all road with him. Tony had a hand on his good shoulder, McGee had one on his fore arm, and Ellie had both around his hand. He was shaking and sweating, in horrible pain. They put a breathing tube in and loaded him into the ambulance. They all climbed in and held his left arm in the same places as before.

"Any preference to a certain hospital?" they all replied, "Bethesda."

"We'll be there soon, Gibbs." He nodded. They kept him awake.

"Hey, boss you doin' any worse?" asked McGee. He shook his head slightly.

"That's good boss." replied Bishop.

"We'll be there in about five minutes." The EMT told them.

#### 4. Got To Get Better

They arrived five minutes later. He was immediately unloaded from the ambulance and into surgery. They sat in the waiting room for news, twenty minutes later Ducky, Abby, and Jimmy Palmer arrived.

"Oh, oh, oh please tell me he's okay! He has to be he's Gibbs! He needs to be. Please, please, please tell me he's gonna be okay." Abby ran up and squeezed each of them.

"Abby, he was injured pretty badly." He told her gently.

"But, but he has to be okay."

"I'm sure he will be okay. Like you said he's Gibbs."

"I will see to his condition, and be of assistance." Ducky announced. They nodded.

They sat down to wait for news. Tony sat in the middle, McGee on his

left and Bishop on his right. McGee had his arms around Abby trying to comfort her. Jimmy was sitting Ellie. Tony had just sat down from getting them all coffee. Gibbs had been in surgery for just over two hours, before Ducky and a Doctor arrived.

"What's his condition?" Abby questioned the doctor.

"He has four broken and three cracked right ribs, three hairline fractures between two of his left ribs. His right collarbone is cracked. He also has a dislocated right shoulder, broken right forearm. He has moderate to severe bruising along his right kidney, lung, and his stomach. His abdomen is raw and has cuts and some missing skin. it was torn from the dashboard. He will need to eat soft foods for a month or two because of the bruising. He has minor cuts and bruises along his rib cage." He said. He got a page and ducky waved him off.

"Jethro will be fine in time. He will only be sore as long as he allows the pain meds to do their job. They have him on very strong pain killers. He will be sore for a long time and will have trouble sitting up. They want him to stay for as long as possible. Know as you all know once he starts feeling better he'll want out, we need to keep him here so he can get better." Ducky told him.

"Can we see him?" asked McGee.

"He's in recovery at the moment. He will be put in a private ICU room within the hour. We can see him then." A nurse came to get them thirty minutes later.

When they walked into his room Jimmy and Abby gasped. He was only wearing hospital pants. His ribs are wrapped and taped, his arm bandaged to his ribs. Some of the bruises are still visible. He has reddish-orange and purple bruising on his right cheek and above a cut on his right eye. He was asleep, lines of pain on his face said he was awake on some level. Abby and Tony sat on each side of his bed. Abby was clutching to McGee for comfort, Ellie sitting by them. Ducky and Jimmy sat beside Tony. Abby pulled the blanket up to just under his armpits. Tony sat on Gibbs right side, hands gently on his right shoulder and forearm over the blanket and bandages. Ellie was sitting by Abby her hand joined hers in cocooning his, her hand under his with Abby's on top.

## 5. Waking up

About half an hour after they sat down Gibbs' hand closed slightly around their hands. Tony, Abby, and Ellie stood up, followed by McGee, Ducky, and Jimmy. Abby and Ellie were holding his hand firmly but gently. Ducky laid his hand over his elbow, Tony and McGee on his shoulder. McGee stood by his the head with his left arm around Abby. Gibbs shifted slightly, making him grunt and grimace. They gently tightened their hold on him, letting him know that they were there.

"Hey, Bossman, try not to move." said Abby, vrushing his hair back.

"Take it easy boss, we got ya." Tony calmly stated, Gibbs head turned towards him.

"Can you wake up for us, Jethro?" asked Ducky. His eyes fluttered slightly.

"Come on boss, you can do It." said McGee. His eyes fluttered again. He shifted slightly groaning.

"Gibbs, we can get meds if you wake up." said Ellie.

He took a slightly deeper breathe and gasped. Then he sighed after holding his breath for a few minutes. He tried to open his eyes again. They only fluttered slightly and he shifted again. He whimpering, ending in a moan.

"We realize the pain you are in, Jethro. We can get you relief is you wake up and go through some tests." said Ducky.

His eyes fluttered and cracked them open. They had turned the lights down. He racked his eyes over each of them. They each saw the moment he remembered what happened. His eyes cleared and he tried to sit up, only to gasp and fall back. He checked over Tony, Tim, and Ellie looking for any injuries.

"You guys okay?" he croaked out weakly. Everyone smiled and chuckled at his barely audible but clearly worried question. He looked around at them confused. "What?"

"You're just predictable in these situations boss." said McGee. He smiled back fractionally then turned serious.

"Injuries?" he asked.

"I sprained my wrist Gibbs" said bishop.

"And I twisted my right ankle and left wrist." Tony said.

"Two bruised fingers and a sprained right hand." McGee told him.

Gibbs looked at Ducky with a raised eyebrow, getting a nod and knowing smirk. Gibbs sunk into his pillows, wincing.

"Good, that's real good." He nodded slightly.

"Glad you're awake Gunny haven't seen you since the Gulf." The doctor said as he walked in.

"Hey, doc." Gibbs said.

"I know you prefer to get right to the point. You have four broken and three cracked right ribs, three hairline fractures on two left ribs. Your right collarbone is cracked, also a dislocated right shoulder, broken right forearm. And moderate to severe bruising along his right kidney, lung, and his stomach. Your abdomen is raw and cut up. Along with minor cuts and bruises along your entire rib cage. Due to the bruising to your stomach you'll need to eat soft foods for a week or two." He told Gibbs.

"How long?" Gibbs asked.

"You'll need to stay for at least a month and a half, but knowing you you'll escape the first chance you get." The doctor said, sharing a smirk.

"I have two options for your medication. One you get a shot of morphine every few hours or when your pain gets above six. However, knowing you Gunny you won't tell and you won't let them." Everyone agreed, smirking at his frown. "Or you get a Morphine pump that. As you know you control it, so do not tolerate it this time. One, so we know your levels and they can give pills when we release you to their care. (Gibbs sighed knowing he couldn't argue with the looks they gave him.) Second, they don't worry about your pain or exploding hearts from stress to your body."

"Get the one that will help you" Abby said.

"I agree, Jethro." Gibbs sighed and nodded. Everyone sighed in relief.

"Good I'll grab the pump." The doctor said. He hooked him up, handing over the control button.

"You can order your own meals, made to order. I arranged for you all to be on the family meals. I know a family when I see one." He announced. They nodded.

They watched T.V. for a few minutes, silent for a few minutes, just relaxing. They heard Gibbs breathing become slow and slightly raspy. No-one looked over, if something was wrong they had to make seem like know big deal.

"You okay, boss." Tony asked nonchalantly.

When he didn't respond, they smiled looked over. Gibbs had fallen asleep opened mouth, puffs coming out. His head was tilted slightly to the right, facing the T.V. still. They turned back to watch the movie.

## 6. Relaxing Together

Ten minutes later they decided to order food. They had gotten hungry. They delayed waking Gibbs up, talking quietly.

"I'll take a roast beef, potatoes, coleslaw, and corn." Said Tony

"I'll have the same only with carrots." said Tim.

"I would like crispy chicken breast, mac-n-cheese, side of potato salad and corn." said Bishop.

"I'll take chicken tenders, potatoes, green beans and a side salad." said Abby.

"I'll take the same but with corn." said Jimmy.

"Boss, wake up." Tony said with a gentle hand resting on his shoulder. He shifted and blinked open his eyes.

"What would you like Jethro?" asked Ducky.

"Chicken broccoli and cheese soup, Grilled cheese, and mac-n-cheese."

"Good, you're actually eating boss." McGee said getting a glare ruined by a small grin. They all nodded with playful grins.

"Point taken," Gibbs said. Ducky ordered for each of them.

"Food should be here in ten minutes, Jethro." Ducky said. He nodded and yawned. He blinked slowly the struggle to open them became increasingly difficult.

"Go back to sleep, Jethro." Ducky only got a slight shake 'no'.

"Hey, boss," Tony waited till Gibbs blearily turned his toward him. "Go ahead we'll wake you up. We have you six." He said, getting a nod.

Gibbs closed his eyes; head still tilted and was out in seconds. Their food arrived six minutes later. They put the tray in place and he didn't even twitch. They set their food on the bed beside him.

"Hey, boss foods here." Tony said in a normal level voice. He woke up the lights were still dimmed. They dug in; they talked and watched the movie. It was eight as they finished, not Gibbs finished slowly. Tony grabbed Gibbs tray, setting the trays on the table by the door.

"Go home people." He almost whispered. Gibbs reclined slightly and relaxed.

"We'll visit but let you have your space." he smiled some and whispered a thank you.

He nodded, sighing out of resignation. Tony, McGee, and Jimmy shook his hand, while, the others hugged him. They waved and left, falling asleep in seconds.

## 7. Nightmares

Gibbs had trouble sleeping that night he was in horrible pain. He couldn't even think about not using the morphine pump. The pain was intense and the morphine wore off in a few hours. The pain woke him up every couple of hours. He also had nightmares of the crash. At least one of his would be severely injured.

The car was heading towards him. He didn't have time to warn the others. This time the car hit Tony's side. They spun into the guardrail on Ellie's side. He sat up and Tony was unconscious. Ellie's side was stuck hanging off the guardrail.

"Tony|Tony, wake up." Tony stirred and started waking up.

"Ellie, you awake?" she looked at him and nodded.

\_"You need to come up here. Be careful." She did and sat in between them.\_

\_"McGee, slide out of the car." McGee tried but they started to slide back. They were fallingâ€|fallingâ€|falling.\_

\_"Gibbs.\_

\_"Gibbs.\_

\_"Gibbs.\_

\_"\_\_Gibbs." He jerked awake at Tony's sight shake of the arm. \_

He was breathing heavily and it made the pain worse. Tony had his hand on his ride side, McGee on his left. His hand searched for the pump and McGee handed it to him. He pressed it three times. He leaned back and closed his eyes, just trying to breathe.\_

\_"\_\_You okay boss?" McGee asked. \_

\_He nodded, "Yeahâ€|yeah I'm okay. You alright." He asked\_

\_"\_\_We're fine remember? You were the only one hurt." Tony said. He nodded.\_

"Yeah."

"What happened boss? You were tossing and turning, but enough to cause bleeding again." McGee told him.

He shook his head, "Dream."

"The accident?" Tony asked.

"Version of." He said.

"You in any pain, still?" he asked.

"Not really." He answered.

"Did they put the brace for your broken forearm?" Tony asked getting a nod.

"They rewrap it to stabilize it and your ribs?" He got another nod. His arm was across his body. His elbow by his side and his arm strait. His hand was not wrapped from the wrist up.

"Alright the others will be here soon." Tony announced.

"We wanted to eat Breakfast together." McGee added. Gibbs rolled his eyes the effect ruined by him smiling slightly. Everyone came in and resumed the same seats as last time.

They said variations of "Hey Gibbs.", "Hey, Bossman.", "Hello Jethro."

"What do you want to eat?" Ducky asked.

"Eggs, toast, bacon and hash. Coffee and Apple juice." Tony said.

"Meat omelet, sausage, toast, coffee, and orange juice." McGee said.

"Eggs, bacon, hash, apple sauce, and coffee." Said Bishop.

"Scrambled eggs, toast, sausage, and orange juice." Said Abby.

"Veggie omelet, toast, bacon, and apple juice." Said Jimmy.

"Jethro? Remember soft food." he had been resting with his eyes closed. He responded without opening his eyes.

"Sausage egg croissant, a bowl of fruit, toast, and Orange juice. And Coffee" He added hopefully.

"No Coffee you just had major surgery Jethro." He smiled at the half-scowl, half-pout.

The food arrived ten minutes later. They dug in. they sat and watched T.V. for an hour. They all left except for Tony. They decided one of them would stay with him until the nightmares slowed. Gibbs agreed because they knew he wasn't weak. it took a little persuasion, but he agreed nonetheless. Gibbs fell asleep in the same position as the night before, only with Tony's hand on his left arm. Tony fell asleep after an hour, in a recliner with his hand still on his arm. Gibbs only had a few nightmares, crying out softly for whoever was hurt badly.

## 8. Pain

The others showed up for a visit. They wanted to make sure he ate and slept. They needed to reassure themselves that he was fine. Gibbs allowed this to happen understanding. If he was completely honest with himself, he enjoyed their love and distraction. He wanted them around as much as they wanted to be. As ritual they ate lunch, together.

"I'll take a grilled chicken cheese, a pickle, chicken noodle soup, mac-n-cheese, and coke." Gibbs said.

The others looked at him surprised. "What, I'm hungry," they gave relieved smirks.

"grilled cheese, tomato soup, coleslaw, and coke." Said Jimmy.

"I'll Burger, fries, fruit and coke." Tony said.

Abby said, "The same."

"Burger, fries, coleslaw, and a pickle." Said McGee.

"Burger, fries, side chicken salad, and a coke." Said Bishop.

Ducky ordered for them. They ate for a while. They joked and laughed watching an old western movie. Gibbs started falling asleep an hour after lunch. It was 1:30p.m. and they decided to let him rest. They had McGee and Abby stay with him. It was for protection (him being a fed.), peace of mind, and to help him. They gave him hugs and goodbyes, leaving him to rest. McGee sat back and Abby stayed on the left side holding his hand. Gibbs woke up from another nightmare for the third time. He was only getting about an hour and a half. It was only 4p.m. He was gasping and clutching his chest, groaning. His eyes roamed rapidly around the room. They landing on Tony, standing over him frowning. He had his hands on his shoulders gently holding him down. He relaxed as he looked over Tony's face.

"You okay Gibbs?" asked a very concerned Abby.

"Will be in a minute." He gasped out.

"Water?" McGee held his head up and the cup to his lips. He took a few sips.

"Thanks" Gibbs said.

McGee put the cup on his rolling table. They sat down as Gibbs leaned back into his pillows. He was trying to breathe through the pain. He grabbed the pump and pressed it twice. They were holding his hand for support. It took two minutes for his heart rate was normal.

"You need anything Gibbs?" he asked.

Gibbs shook his head. He yawned, blinking slowly. He took the remote and turned on the T.V. putting on the western channel. He coughed very slightly. Abby handed him the water taking it back when he was finished. They sat in comfortable silence for a while. They looked over twenty minutes to see him yawn for the fifth time.

McGee sighed, "Boss why don't we see about a sleeping pill."

"I'm fine." It wasn't convincing even less so when it ended in a yawn. Not to mention his tired and bleary eyes.

"Yeah, 'cuz an hour and a half of sleep at a shot is perfectly fine." Gibbs snorted. "Boss, you need sleep to recover. We both know if I was doing this you'd kick my ass." After a few seconds he nodded.

She kissed his forehead, "Sleep dad."

Abby rubbed his knuckles with her thumb, while pushing his hair back. She carded her fingers through his hair. McGee walked out of the room to tell the nurse. She came in a few seconds later. Gibbs was dead to the world in seconds. They sat down and relaxed. She held his hand in both of hers. He angled the chair to go alongside the bed and reclined with his hand on Gibbs bandaged elbow. They went from watching Gibbs and an action movie.

## 9. Tired Gibbs

Gibbs had been sleeping for four straight hours, when the team showed up to visit. They walked in and stopped smiling. McGee and Abby

looked up sharing knowing smiles. Gibbs had his head back mouth wide open, snoring loudly, resting comfortably. They sat, frowning when he didn't stir or twitch.

McGee said, "Got him to take a sleeping pill."

"No small feat." Ducky said. They all smiled.

"I believe we are all used to eating late. Let's wait for him to wake up." Abby said. They all agreed.

It was almost like agreement Gibbs snorted a snore. He shifted onto his left side, putting his arm under his head, curling his legs up. They all chuckled as he continued snoring loudly, watching a few T.V. shows. About three hours later Gibbs started to wake up sniffling slightly. They chuckled slightly. He turned back onto his back. His eyes slowly opened and he yawned. They stayed sitting in their 'assigned' seats as they greeted them.

"Hello Jethro, Jimmy is with Brenna." Ducky said.

"Hey Gibbs" Abby and Ellie said smiling at him.

"Boss" Tony and Tim said.

"Hey, what time 'sit' he said groggily.

"21h00" said Tony.

"You eat yet?" they shook their heads. "Why?"

"We came here to see you, Bossman." Abby said. He shook his head in fond exaggeration.

"I'll have grilled chicken breast, mac-n-cheese, corn, a roll, and coke." Tony.

"Roast beef, mashed potato, carrots, a roll, and coke." McGee said.

"Chicken tenders, coleslaw, corn, and a coke." Abby.

"Fish, mashed potatoes, mac-n-cheese, peas, and a coke." Ellie.

"I'll take grilled chicken cheese, tomato soup, a roll, and a coke." Gibbs said.

They had what was becoming their usual night, eat, watch T.V., watch Gibbs doze a few times, and say goodbye. Gibbs had a low dose sleeping pill, sleeping restfully, hardly moving all night. She slept reclined in the recliner parallel to the hospital bed, with full view of the t.v. She was happy to stay with him. He woke up six hours later, at 5a.m., with a slight twitch. Ellie had her hand in his.

She looked at him, "Pain?"

He shook his head with a smirk, "I don't sleep much, Bish." He snorted.

He struggled to sit up. Ellie helped him, surprised at how little he weighed. He wasn't quite unhealthy, mainly muscular and she had a lot of strength. She does have three older brothers. He hadn't tried to sit up the past few days, so the others probably didn't know. Ducky would most likely still be lecturing him weeks later. She fluffed his pillows and he relaxed into them. They watched some t.v. until Gibbs fell asleep a half hour later. He was obviously exhausted.

"Well, so much for not getting much sleep." She smiled.

## 10. Getting Better

Gibbs woke up at 11a.m. in the morning. He slept for five and a half straight hours. He didn't wake up once, not until the team walking in. They smiled and greeted him. Abby kissed his forehead and he kissed her cheek. McGee and Tony gently squeezed his shoulders. Ducky patted his bandaged elbow. They all sat in their usual seats.

"Bish, said you slept through breakfast." He nodded at Tony. He tried to sit up but couldn't. Tony and McGee took a shoulder and lifted him up some, realizing how he weighs, putting their one on his back and lifted. Abby fluffed his pillows, shifting them. They lifted the bed and laid him back, sat back down.

"Thanks." He said groggily, his breathing is labored and pained. He relaxed a few second after pressing the pump once.

"No problem boss." said Tony. They watched t.v. together. Gibbs stomach growled and everyone chuckled.

"Let's get some food, hmm? You can have normal food that's easy to digest." Ducky smiled.

"I want roast beef, baked potato, coleslaw, corn, coke and coffee." Gibbs said. "They said I could have coffee now!" He practically beamed. Everyone smiled at his huge smile.

"Good to see your appetite and coffee are back." Ducky said.

"I'll have grilled cheese, tomato soup, bacon, carrots, and coke." Tony said.

"I'll have the same." McGee said.

"Oh, oh, oh grilled chicken, side salad, corn, and cake." Abby said.

"I'd like grilled chicken, potato salad, fruit bowl, corn, and coke." Ellie said. Ducky ordered their food.

Gibbs patted the bed and Abby sat by him. Everyone smiled when he put his arm around her shoulders. Gibbs managed to stay awake until food arrived; in fact he was wide awake. When food arrived there was enough room for them both to use the bed food tray. They dug in, well, Gibbs practically scarfed his down. They watched in pleasant amazement as he finished in less than ten minutes. Gibbs reached over and stole a piece of Tony's bacon.

"Boss." Tony playfully whined.

"What?" Gibbs tried to put on his best innocent face. It was ruined when he laughed. The others joined him. He wound up coughing and Abby helped him sit up. She also felt how much he weighed, but relaxed when he relaxed with a smile.

"Easy boss." said McGee.

"I'm fine." He said. They all nodded.

They turned the t.v. onto a western movie. They watched it for a few hours. Gibbs started falling asleep. They went to leave but he woke up. Every time they went to leave he'd wake up. He'd looked confusedly at them so they sat back down. He relaxed, so they decided to stay for a few hours. They didn't leave until after dinner. Gibbs didn't have a bead dream while they were there. Ducky and Tony stayed with him that night.

#### 11. 4 Days Later

Gibbs had a few nightmares that night, he hadn't in four days. He had been there a total of nine days. He was getting better, while still weak he was recovering relatively fast. They ended when Tony and Ducky spoke or touched his arm. He would realize their presence in his sleep and relax and would go back into a deep sleep. The dreams were about the crash. They would fall over the guardrail or one of the team would be unconscious. Just like the one he was having. This one was definitely the worst yet.

\_He looked over and then back. McGee wasn't stirring. He, Tony, and Ellie shared a concerned look. \_

\_ "You okay Bish?" he heard Tony ask.\_

\_ "Yeah." \_

\_ "What about Tim?" Gibbs asked. They couldn't wake him up.\_

\_ "McGee, get up." Gibbs tried to bark out.\_

\_ "Bishop, check his breathing." He told her.\_

\_ "He is and his heart beat is weak." \_

\_ "McGee" \_

"McGee" He started saying his name out loud each time he said it.

\_ "McGee, wake up." \_

Tony and Ducky shared a concerned look. They stood up, as he continued to mumble McGee's name.

"It's a bad one Ducky." He said. Ducky nodded.

Tony went to shake him awake but before he could touch him he jumped awake. He almost sat up but Tony was fast enough to hold him back. He

looked around wildly and calmed when he remembered. They placed a hand on his shoulder and forearm. His panting was labored. He was basically gasping. His eyes were squeezed shut. Tony silently handed him the pump closing his other hand around his; half in support and half because he thought the pain kept him from squeezing it. He was shaking, sweating, and groaning.

"Bossâ€|boss?" they shared another look when he opened his eyes and couldn't focus.

"Gibbs,.." Tony squeezed his hand.

"Jethro, squeeze Anthony's hand." Tony nodded when he got a faint squeeze. Gibbs eyes squeezed shut again, as a wave of pain hit and he shook even more violently.

"Come on boss focus on me." Tony said. Gibbs grunted and cracked his eyes open again. He looked at him.

"How many?" he looked confused. "Presses, you're on a relatively small dose." he clarified.

"fâ€|fi-five," he gasped out but Tony understood and helped him press it. Gibbs relaxed into his pillows.

He groggily blinked his eyes a few times. They waited for his eyes to focus before talking to him again.

"You alright, boss?" Tony asked. He nodded relaxing completely and groggily blinked his eyes until they refused to open.

"Sleep, Jethro."

"We have your six."

"Never failed toâ€|Nozzoâ€|not in overâ€|a decade." He almost fell asleep talking but Tony grinned nonetheless. They sat down, as he fell back asleep in seconds.

## 12. Fever

The next day McGee, Abby, and Ellie joined Ducky, Tony, and Gibbs. They decided to stay for a few hours after lunch, noticing the pain he was in. It had been two hours after lunch when the next nightmare hit. It was the same one where McGee wouldn't wake up. Abby was shocked when his head started violently turning from side to side. By the time he started mumbling Tony and Ducky had a hand on his shoulder and Ellie hand hers running through his hair. Abby started crying when his mumbles became understandable, McGee held her. Gibbs trying to move around but they gently held him down. He started whimpering.

"Jethro we are all fine."

"Come on boss, it's okay." Said Tony.

"We're here Gibbs. Wake up." Ellie said.

"They haven't been this bad." Tony whispered while Ellie brushed away

a few stray hairs from his face.

"He has a fever, Duck." Ellie told them.

Ducky felt his forehead, "It is most definitely over 102 degrees." He went to the door and asked for a thermometer and ice packs.

"Yes it is 103.3"

They pulled back the blankets and put ice packs on him. McGee put some on the sides of his neck. Abby and Ellie put some under his armpits, while Tony and Ducky put a few on his groin. They just lifted the gown slightly to give the girls and Gibbs privacy. They put the gown back but kept the blankets off.

Tony said. He mumbled slightly and started kicked. They had to hold him down to keep him from getting hurt. "Bossâ€|Boss it's okay."

"shhâ€|shh you're okay Gibbs." Ellie cooed. His kicking slowed slightly.

"Jethro you have a high fever; we have to use the ice." Ducky told him and he calmed even more at their voices. He mumbled and whimpered slightly.

"I know boss; sorry we'll take it off once your fevers down." Tony reassured him.

Gibbs stopped moving when he realized they were there. Everyone shared a look as he opened his eyes; the fogginess from the fever concerning. He was shivering from the cold, fever, and pain. He couldn't hold back a few groans.

"It's okay Gibbs." Abby said. He whimpered, everyone looked concerned as his teeth chattered.

"m' c-c-col-led." He mumbled, barely audible.

"I now boss, I know. Sorry." He said as Gibbs' shivering increased. Ducky checked the thermometer.

"It's been ten minutes and it's down to 101."

They started taking the ice off, letting him turn onto his left and curl up. They cover him up with a sheet, lifting him up slightly and wrapped him in the sheet. He was like a rag doll. Gibbs clutched the sheet in his hand pulling it up under his chin. They sat down and checked him every once in a while.

"Hey Ducky how much does he weight; I don't think he's underweight. We're family so we need to watch out for him." Tony said.

"He has lost 50lbs the past six months with the constant back-to-back cases, forgetting to eat and all. It's not an unhealthy amount, unlike the method. He is on the thin side of healthy but not worrisome at all really. He never weighed a lot, with the need to stay light on his feet, the job and all. He weighs 135lbs." Ducky informed them. Gibbs moaned and everyone jumped up.

He batted Ducky's hand as went to feel his forehead, he moaned in pain. Ducky used this to his advantage holding his forearm down parallel to his head and felt his forehead. He looked around at them Ducky and Tony were by his head, McGee and Abby by him, and Ellie by Ducky.

"You still have a fever of 102°" Ducky told him.

"Tony."

"Yeah?"

"bag." He gasped out. Tony handed him one and lifted his head as he violently vomited. Ducky, Abby and Ellie rubbed his back.

An hour later the nurse gave him a bag of antibiotics in a cold solution to help his fever. It turned out he had a slight infection. They all stayed with him that night, they had shifts in a way either. Half slept while the others rubbed his back, holding the vomit bag, or checking his fever.

### 13. Medical Care

It took five days for the infection to go away. He had been there for two weeks. The vomiting hurt but caused no bleeding. A nurse and doctor came in twice a week to check hi bandages. The team stay while they did. They cut bandages of.

"Your abdomen is still raw but new skin is growing." Gibbs just grunted. They all smirked.

Tony and Ducky held his hand while Abby and Ellie brushed his hair back. McGee handed them supplies. It hurt him badly as they put creams, healing agents, and antibiotics on his abdomen. He would tense and moan. No one could touch his abdomen without causing agony.

"It's alright boss." Tony said rubbing his knuckles. He got a grunt in response.

They put gauze over the bottom of his rib cage and stomach. They put several layers. Then they slowly sat him up. Tony and McGee sat behind him to support him. Abby took over holding his hand, in both of hers. Ellie continued running her hands through his hair. His head hung as he gasped from the pain. They kept his body strait as the doctor and nurse used bandages to keep them in place, then taped them. They carefully move out from behind him as they slowly laid his tense body down. they sat down by him. Tony and Ducky had a hand on his shoulders in support. Abby and Ellie held his hands with both of theirs. After these he couldn't unclench his hands, they got him to stop being overly careful with their hands. They did not have to ask how many times they had to press the pump. The doctors told them to do it for him with the pain making him clench his hands. They pressed it six times to numb him to give his body rest from the cycle of intense pain waves.

"It will work in a few seconds, Jethro." Ducky said. He grunted back.

He was tense and shaking. His eyes were squeezed shut. His gasping breaths ended in shaky rasps. McGee handed him the pump as he sat down. They knew the moment he was numb because he relaxed and dopily hummed, almost sounded like a purr. They chuckled at his lazy smile, he blearily opened his eyes and chuckled back.

"Feel Gooooood" he whispered and they laughed.

"Good." Tony said chuckling.

"Yeah, happy for you Bossman." Abby said.

"Shhâ€|sleepy." He told them sedately. They nodded. He blearily blinked and fell asleep. They smiled at him and relaxed.

"Thankfully it works fast." McGee said.

"Even more glad he agreed to the pump." Abby said.

They stayed with him and left after dinner. Ellie, McGee and Tony stayed with him to keep an eye on his pain and nightmares. The boys fell asleep with their arms crossed and legs carefully on the bed. Ellie had her head on the bed holding a hand. He slept very well. He luckily didn't have any nightmares.

#### 14. Enjoying Time Together

The next week he was able to stay awake all day. He slept great at night, the nightmares were few and in between. They decided that only one person needed to stay with him at night. McGee stayed on Mondays, Tony on Tuesdays, Ellie on Wednesdays, Abby on Thursday, Ducky on Fridays. The weekends Brenna and Jimmy stayed together on Saturday. Abby made a chart and coerced Gibbs to agree. They all knew it was a show to let them know he was fine because he actually wanted them there. Gibbs only condition was everyone had Sundays off. They could come for meals but sleep at home. It was Wednesday morning; 6 a.m. the usual time Ellie got up but Gibbs had slept in an hour. At 6:25 he was momentarily alone. Ellie came in carrying two cups of large coffee, she had offered to go get it for them.

"Here you go." She handed him his coffee while sitting down.

"Thanks." He inhales savoring the smell before drinking.

They sat down watching t.v. in comfortable silence. They went between western movies, comedy movies, and football. They shared jokes or commented on a play every once in a while. They were just hanging out and relaxing. They enjoyed the quiet and were ready to enjoy everyone else's company when they showed up, at 7.

"Hello Jethro, Eleanor" Ducky addressed him.

"Hey Gibbs, Bish." they said.

He nodded back, "Mornin'."

"Hey." Bishop said.

"We've going between watching westerns, comedies, and football." Gibbs said.

"Sounds good" said McGee.

"Yes that sounds good, much better than watching WWE with mother." Ducky said making everyone laugh and Gibbs ended up coughing violently. Gibbs leaned back into the pillows and breathed deeply and carefully.

"You need the pump?" Abby's the only one who could actually show concerned. He shook his head already relaxing. He opened his eyes and they continued watching the game. They decided to order breakfast at 7:30, a half hour later.

"Meat omelet, rye toast, ham, hash, a fruit bowl and another coffee." Gibbs said.

"Same." Tony said.

"Eggs, sausage, hash, rye toast, fruit bowl, and orange juice." Ellie said.

"Oatmeal, bacon, hash, white toast, an apple, and apple juice." McGee said.

"Pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, homemade toast, apple sauce, and chocolate milk." Abby said.

They ate in peace while watching movies. They decided on westerns. They were happy to eat and joke around. It was easy for them to relax together. It would have been fun if they weren't in the hospital. They enjoyed each other's company.

## 15. Truly Better

The next day Gibbs had little pain and the morphine was on a medium to low setting. The past week Gibbs had gained about 8lbs. along with the meals Gibbs had a snack before dinner and sometimes in the middle of the night. They wanted him to gain weight so they wanted to shovel food down his throat. It was unnecessary because he was actually eating. He was hungry and they embraced it. He had jokingly said that when they were caseless food tasted more delicious. This became a big joke between them.

"So boss, those pancakes taste unusually delicious?" Tony asked.

"You bet." He joked back.

"Well good to hear, Jethro. You've gained 10lbs the last two and a half weeks, with the way you've been eating." He just got a raised eyebrow in response.

"Yeah it's a good thing Bossman." Abby said.

"Uh-huh?" he questions.

"You have lost a lot of weight since your last injuring just over six months ago."

"Ah, Duck ya know when I get focused I'll forget to eat."

"Yes we will have to watch that won't we?" Ducky stated more than asked. Gibbs looked around only getting stern but concerned faces. Knowing he had to reassure them.

"Ya know I don't do it on purpose." He told them.

"We know boss." Tony patted his shoulder.

"Let's watch a movie." McGee said.

Tony, McGee, Ducky, and Abby went to get coffee; there was a Starbucks in the hospital. Ellie went to the bathroom. Gibbs waited for a few minutes so he wouldn't be seen struggling. He threw off the blankets and moved unto his left side. He put his legs over the edge and slowly sat up using the rail. He sat there catching his breath for a few minutes. He slowly slides of the bed clutching the rails. He grabbed the morphine pump. He straightened and held on tightly to the poll on morphine pump. He got his feet under him. He took a shaky half step away from the bed. It was unstable but not horribly difficult. He took five more slow shaky steps, leaning slightly towards the pump. The other's meet up in the hall and headed to the room. They walked in and stopped, Gibbs was looking at the floor concentrating on his feet. Ellie went to walk forward to help but was stopped by Tony and Ducky, who had smiles. She looked at McGee and Abby who had fond smiles. She realized this was ritual meaning he was getting better. Gibbs was pouring sweat and panting. He stubbornly pressed forward.

"Jethro you are impossible." He didn't even look up, smirking wildly. They sat down at their usual spots.

"Yeah, but you expect it."

"Unfortunately" Tony said.

Gibbs had taken ten more shaky half steps. He was a foot away from the bed. They tensed as his legs buckled but he caught himself. He straightened up and started walking after a few seconds. He made it half way to the wall and slowly turned around. He walked back to the bed. He put the pump back and leaned back on the bed. He put his hands on each rail and pushed himself up. He turned and half leaned, half collapsed into his pillows. He got comfortable and breathed heavily.

"How is your pain, Jethro?"

"Not bad." He replied. He was practically panting, sweating, and looked absolutely exhausted.

"That's bull, boss." McGee said.

"How bad?" Tony pressed.

"eight." He said simply.

"Yeah that's not bad at allâ€¦and don't glare at me Gibbs doesn't work when you're in pain." Ellie said. He sighed. Abby handed him the pump and he pressed it three times. He fell asleep in a few minutes and everyone smiled at his smug look. They knew he was actually, truly feeling better.

## 16. Walking

"I will allow you to go for short walks but only because I know you are too stubborn to stop yourself, you being a Special Agent and Marine. However, Agent Gibbs I want to stress that it is very important that when you walk you have at the very least one person."

"Yeah doc, they'll keep me in line." He said.

"Oh I know they will, but you are tricky, you'd wait to be alone" Gibbs just smirked and ducked his head.

"Which just so happens to be why you'll be alone in the bathroom, well technically. Someone will be sitting by the bed, wide awake."

"Yeah, I know." He sighed.

"Well, it's all settled then." The doctor said and left.

A few minutes later Gibbs threw his blankets off. He turned in his side, staying on his elbow. The team jumped up. McGee, Abby, Ellie, And Ducky were to his back. Tony stood up as Gibbs put both hands on the head rail. He pushed up arms shaking slightly with the effort, he grunted when he was mostly upright. He straightened slowly everyone watched with exasperated fondness as he forced himself upright. He just had scrub pants on, because wearing a shirt on hurt his abdomen too much. He controlled his slide of the bed with hands on each rail. He landed gently leaning against the bed. Tony handed him the pump pole as he recovered. Gibbs straightened and Tony took his bound forearm and put the other around his waist, with his hand curled around his side just above his hip, for balance.

"Thanks." He grunted out. They stood for a few minutes. Gibbs kept one hand on the pole, leaning very slightly into Tony's support.

"Anytime Gibbs, anytime." He said. They smiled that the clear friendship between them.

The others stand by the bed. They turned and three steps from the bed. Then turned to the right and walked parallel to the bed. Gibbs was taking slow but slightly shaky steps. They stopped a foot from the wall, turned and walked back. Gibbs was panting and wincing. He was leaning slightly heavier against Tony. They stopped a few steps from the end of the bed. Gibbs had his head bowed and was clutching the pole tightly. He took a shaky half step and stopped.

"Do you need to sit down, boss?" McGee asked.

Gibbs nodded shakily. McGee grabbed a chair and rushed over. He set it next Gibbs side. He and Tony turned him with a hand on each

shoulder and forearms. Ellie and Abby held him by his side and back gently as they guided him to the chair. Started to lean back slightly, about to collapse but they held him steady to control his decent. They slowly sat him down and once he was Ducky handed him the pump control. Gibbs had his head bowed and he didn't notice with his eyes squeezed shut. Ducky opened on clenched fist and put the control in it. He pressed it three times. After a few minutes he relaxed. They stood there waiting for the next move. He scooted to the edge of the chair. Tony took the same position, when Gibbs went to grab the pump for leverage; McGee took his forearm and shoulder. When they got a slight nod they gently pulled him up. They helped him get to the bed. They stepped back and sat down as he leaned against it. They watched as he put his hands on the rails and he pushed himself onto the bed. He scooted back slightly. He turned and he laid down.

"You okay, Gibbs?" Abby asked, getting a slight smile and a nod.

He sighed slightly as he tried to relax into his pillows. His eyes were pinched and his mouth was a firm line. He felt for the pump and Ellie handed it to him. He sighed again as he pressed the pump twice more. He relaxed and fell asleep after a few minutes. They smiled knowing he was really getting stronger. An hour later he woke up and they ate lunch. Two hours after that McGee and Ellie helped him walk. He had to sit down again, but he was stronger than he was a few days ago. He went back to sleep after pressing the pump a few times. This would become a habit so they continued this pattern of a few short walks a day. He had been there for four weeks the next day would be the first day of the next month.

## 17. New Room

The next day after lunch Gibbs was doing the usual walk in the room. The last few days he has gotten stronger. He was helped by Ducky and Abby. He didn't have to stop as long as he walked slowly. He levered himself into the bed and relaxed into it. As he leaned into his pillows he only had to press the pump twice. They watched happy as he stayed awake and in no pain. They watched t.v. and ate dinner together. After dinner he went for another slow walk. It was getting easier with him walking after each meal. While it tired him out, it made him stronger. They were all too happy to help. As they put their trays down they turned around. Gibbs was already sliding off the bed. They sighed as one.

"Jethro you are absolutely impossible." Ducky said.

"You wouldn't want me any other way." He replied.

"No boss, we wouldn't" Tony and McGee said at the same time.

They went to walk towards him but he grabbed the pump and started walking. They walked to the bed and sat down in their seats. Gibbs made the walk and made it onto the on his own. He only pressed the pump twice. They smiled as they scooted forwards. He was panting and sweating slightly but smiled back nonetheless. He was happy and they gave him that.

"You need to let us help you, Jethro." Ducky reprimanded mildly, smiling as well.

"Ah, Duck I know my body. I'm fine to walk around the room alone."

"Is that so?" Ducky replied.

"Yes, now see about getting rid of this catheter." He said smirking back. Ducky did and the other stepped out of the room as it was removed. They came back a few minutes later with coffee to see him asleep. When they sat down he dozily opened his eyes,

"Coffee?"

"Yes." Ellie said as they smirked back. Tony handed him his.

A few minutes after he finished it they looked at him and smiled. He had set his empty coffee cup down on the table and fallen asleep. They watched t.v quietly as he slept. He woke up for dinner then walked on his own. They smiled at his progress as he slept. He was fast asleep after the work he did that day. He had exhausted himself and they knew that it was the best way for him to heal. Help him so he doesn't overwork himself, let him tire and actually rest, and most importantly let him relax. He would only relax if he could feel like he was doing something. The following morning the doctor came in after breakfast to see him walk alone.

"I think you can walk a small distance if you take it slow. Walk a little down the hall, WITH help." He stressed.

"Sound good doc." He smiled a little.

"Good, we are moving you out of the ICU tonight." He replied and walked out of the door to see his other patients.

They decided to do that now. With Tony at his right bracing him like before. Abby tucked under his arm. McGee walked close to her holding the morphine pump. Ellie and Ducky walked next to Tony. They walked one football field away from the door. They turned and walked back. He settled into the bed and relaxed. McGee put the pump in place and handed him the control. He pressed it three times. He was sweating slightly and breathing heavy. He was asleep in seconds from exhaustion alone. He woke up when they changed rooms. He was put in a private but regular hospital room. They said goodbye and gave hugs. Tony, Abby, and McGee stayed that night.

## 18. Strengthening

Gibbs woke up in the new room at 9a.m. to eggs, pancakes, sausage, rye toast, fruit bowl, and coffee. He smiled at McGee as he held out his coffee. He took it savored the smell and drank a big gulp. They smiled and chuckled at his sigh of contentment and happy smile.

"You slept in so we ordered breakfast." he looked peaceful as he started eating, making them smile. They followed and enjoyed their food.

"This is from Lainey isn't it?" he smiled after taking a bite of pancake.

"Made special just for you, boss." Tony said.

Abby kissed his cheek, "that's from her. She said to tell you to 'feel better sugar, you need to come in we miss you. Not to mention you're why we're in business, hon.'" They all laughed.

"It is very true we do get her food in the many early mornings that we work a case." Ducky said.

"Very true Duck." They shared smiles as they dug in. They always took their time eating her food; it was too good to rush.

They finished eating and went on their usual short walk. They walked a little farther than they had been. When they arrived back to the room Gibbs settled himself into the bed. They smiled when he relaxed immediately and didn't press the pump control. It was good to see him relax. He looked a little tired but not enough to sleep. It was difficult to see him in pain so they were elated when he wasn't. the pain was becoming less and less. He was happy. They watched t.v. for a few hours. They heard snoring and looked over. He was completely asleep with his head slightly to the right, mouth wide open.

"Well, he tired himself out." Tony whispered. They didn't want to wake him.

"Yes he did." McGee said in a normal voice only getting 'are you crazy' looks. Gibbs loud snore stopped suddenly, he smacked his mouth a few times, and turned on his side. He continued almost silently snoring. Everyone looked on very amused and surprised. They laughed when he didn't even move.

"Wow, his guard down." Tony said.

"That's weird but also good because he trusts us to take care of him." They smiled at Abby's true statement.

"Yes, I quite agree dear Abby."

Gibbs started snoring louder getting a laugh at his almost childish look. Curled on his side, mouth open, and clutching the blanket ends to his chest. The blanket was wrapped around his shoulders. His lips were curved up slightly even with his mouth open.

"He looks like a big kid." Abby said.

"Don't ever tell him that." Tony replied.

"Very true." She nodded seriously and they laughed. They knew he was really a teddy bear, especially with Abby. They loved him for who he was, a big hearted man who protects it with gruffness. He's a great agent because of his heart. He can be hard when he needs to. He takes care of his own.

"Can't wait for him to get back to work." Tony said.

"Same here." McGee said.

"Yep." Abby said.

"Jethro will return soon."

"Our leave is almost up." Ellie said.

"He still has the rest of this month in the hospital, then a month before desk duty." Ducky said. They nodded.

They relaxed the rest of the day. They left after the dinner walk, while Tony and Ellie stayed the night. They all slept like babies. The stress of an injured Gibbs had kept them awake. They could rest in the knowledge that he was healing and gaining his strength back. He would be back to work in two months. He had the next 29 days of April in the hospital to insure his strength was back. They had to make sure he was healed before releasing him. Then he had to live with someone for at least two weeks (Most likely Tony and Abby) before he could go back to work two weeks after that. They were as anxious to have him back, as he wanted to be back.

#### 19. Sabotage

The next morning Gibbs woke up at 6a.m. looking around he was surprise to be alone. Tony and Ellie must have stepped out probably to get coffee. He was in more pain today for some reason. He looked for the pump and it was on the table. Unfortunately the table was a few feet away from the bed. He looked to the door but they weren't coming down the hallway. He sighed slightly, wincing. His ribs were an 8, abdomen a 7 1/2, arm an 6 1/2, and his shoulders a 6. He's hurting worse by the minute. He went to throw off the blanket, barely lifted his left side, weight on the right, but the pain flared. He slowly laid back down after flinching to a halt. He controlled his breathing, eyes pinched, and blood rushing in his ears. Three minutes later Tony and Ellie walked in seeing his tense pained body. Tony rushed over to the bedside table and put their coffee down. They both rushed to his side Tony on his right and Ellie on his left. Ellie clutched his hand, while Tony had a hand on his shoulder and forearm. They shared a worried look as he didn't respond and started shaking worse from pain.

"Boss" Tony called softly. He got no response but Gibbs whimpered.

"Gibbs" Ellie called gently. "Gibbs" she squeezed his hand as she repeated.

"Ahhhh." Gibbs just moaned in pain.

"Why is he in so much pain?" she asked.

"I don't know it hasn't been this bad since the first few days."

The others walked in and all but ran to the bed. Jimmy and Brenna stood at the foot. McGee had Abby in his arms they stood on the side by the foot of the bed. They were next to Ellie. Ducky took Tony's spot, putting his hands on his shoulder and elbow. Tony placed a hand on his forearm and his left on the rail. The others were worried and shocked as he didn't notice.

"How long has he been unresponsive?" Ducky asked.

"We walked in about five minutes ago, no idea how long before." Tony said and Ducky nodded never looking up from his pinched face and scrunched eyes. He moaned and whimpered.

"Jethroâ€| Jethro?" No response.

"Ellie could you take his hand of the blanket and turn his hand open." After a few seconds of working gently, opened and turned his hand.

"That's a problem." They all followed his line of sight. His morphine pump IV had slipped out.

"Jethro can you hear me." He got a rumble that may have been and= affirmative. The pain kicked up another notch and he shook more.

"Can you open your eyes for me?" he asked him. His eyes fluttered but didn't open.

"That's it come on, Gibbs." Ellie said squeezing his hand and shoulder.

"Come on boss." Tony said. Gibbs eyes fluttered and groaned.

"Jethro, open your eyes." Ducky said firmly. His eyes fluttered several times and opened half way, immediately seeing the severe agony clear in his eyes.

"What's your pain level, Dear lad." He just moaned and shook his head slightly, almost violently shaking from pain.

"Okay, can you tell me how your IV got disconnected?" He smoothed his hair back.

"No" he mumbled.

"Hey Gibbs" Ellie waited until he looked at her. "Squeeze my handâ€|hard as you can." He did

"Good, that's real good Gibbs." She smiled slightly, his lips curved very slightly in response.

"Boss, I'm gonna get a nurse to put another IV in." Jimmy said getting a small nod, he and Brenna left to get one. His breathing was shallow, fast, and labored.

"Does it hurt to breathe?" Tony asked. He got a nod.

"Can you tell us where it hurts?" Ellie asked.

"R-Ribsâ€|fieryâ€|9, Abd-abdomenâ€|burn-ningâ€|pinch 8 Â½, arm acheyâ€|7 Â½, ...sh-should-der st-stiffâ€|achey 7." He slowly stuttered out. His breathing was still labored and he was shaking from pain.

"Okay, alright relax, boss." McGee said as he set his hand on his ankle.

"You're alright, Bossman." Abby said.

Jimmy, Brenna and the nurse walked in. Ducky informed the nurse of

his pain and she hooked up the new pump. She handed him the new pump control and he pressed it five times.

He relaxed after about ten seconds. They sat down reclined in their chair. Tony had a hand on his shoulder. Ducky was reclined back. Jimmy and Brenna sat at the end of the bed. McGee sat by the head of the bed with Abby curled in his lap, hand on Gibbs forearm. Ellie sat with his hand in his. They relaxed as he leaned comfortably into his pillows. The dose would usually knock him out but the pain made it less tiring than usual.

"Why was your IV, on the table." Tony asked.

"Gibbs replied tiredly, "dunno."

"You didn't take it off?" Abby asked gently. He shook his head.

"None of the nurses knew anything." They looked questioningly at him. "We sorta raised hell."

"You have learned how to tell when people are lying." Abby said.

"Wait, then who did it?" McGee said. They shared a look.

## 20. Not An Accident

They looked worriedly at each other. Who was it? Was it an accident? If not who was it? Who would want to hurt him? Who could get access to his morphine pump?

"What's going on?" Abby asked.

"Relax Abbs; we don't know what's happening."

"It could have been an accident." McGee said though no one really thought so.

"If I've learned anything, it's to trust your gut." They smiled at Jimmy.

"Good thing to trust Jim." Gibbs nodded.

"I'll get prints." McGee said. Gibbs raised an eyebrow.

"Well, if anything we can yell at whoever messed up!" He said seriously. They smiled at him.

He used tape to get several prints of the IV tubing. Abby went with him to scan the prints. Tony and Ellie decided to stay for protection full time. McGee would come in and release one of them throughout the day. Jimmy, Brenna, Ducky, and Abby would visit at lunch. The two who were with him would help him walk with a hand on elbow and an arm around his waist. It was the next day after breakfast. Tony and Bishop had a hand on an elbow and one around his back. Gibbs was bracing his arm and ribs with his left arm. They helped him sit up. They move to the side as he turned and scooted to edge in between both of them. They helped control his descent with one arm around his

ribs/arms and the other around his waist. They helped him stand as he swayed slightly. He'd had pain spikes throughout the night and breakfast. Gibbs had been wrapped in blankets because he was freezing.

"Do you want a robe instead of a shirt?" Ellie asked getting a nod. They helped him slide one arm in and closed the front tightly. Tony tied it for him around his waist.

"Okay ready?" Tony asked. He nodded.

Ellie handed him the pump, he grasped it tightly. Tony put a hand on his Right elbow and the other around his waist. Ducky hovered by the pump. The others walked behind him. They took small shaky steps. They walked out the door and a half football yard. They stopped as Gibbs slowed his steps. They waited for his nod and turned around. He leaned against the pump slightly. They walked into the room and approached the bed. They practically lifted him into the bed. He leaned into the pillows completely exhausted. He pressed the pump twice, falling asleep in seconds, they sighed at the agony induced exhaustion.

"He'll be okay." Tony said.

Two hours later McGee and Abby came in. They sat down as they all agreed to wait until Gibbs woke. He had horrible sleep that night. He would doze for a half hour to an hour and wake up. He'd stay awake for a few hours then doze back off. Now, he was completely out, mouth open snoring slightly. He didn't move when they came in. they watched t.v. for a few hours until they heard a groan.

"Hey boss." McGee said as Abby gently hugged and kissed his forehead.

"Hey." He said groggily. He sat the bed up some.

"How ya feelin', Gibbs?" Abby asks."

"Good, Morphine's still on a high dose."

"That's good." McGee said.

"You need it, after yesterday." Bishop said giving him a serious look.

"Yeah, yeah I know." He grumbled tiredly, getting chuckles.

"Speaking of yesterday we have results." McGee said.

"Results?" he said making them laugh as he instantly perked up. His eyes were shining in interest.

"Yes. I'm gonna be straight with you on this one. Because it's so important, well not more important than other cases. It's just well it's you Gibbs. Anyway, McGee got prints from the all of the nurses you've had, to make sure we had elimination prints. I checked through all the ID's that came back, ruling out the nurses. We got a name." she looked expectantly at him.

"Who is it Abby?" He said looking at her with fond exasperation.

"Henry Josh Connery. Also known as the man who caused your accident? I doubt he was texting like he told the cops. I, also doubt he's repentant as a he seemed to the cops." She said angrily.

"Easy Abbs." Gibbs smirked.

"I'm just worried Gibbs."

"I know Abbs, I know."

He replied scooting over on the bed, lifting an arm. She wasted no time climbing in the bed and laying her head over his heart. He hugged her with his good arm pushing her close to his body for her comfort. He kissed her head. Ellie took his hand again, squeezing. McGee and Tony put a hand on his shoulder, also squeezing. Ducky patted his elbow gently. While, Jimmy squeezed an ankle, as Brenna got up and kissed his cheek and sat down on Jimmy's lap, curling into him. Jimmy put his arms around her as they sat next to Ducky. They all reclined in their seats.

"I'll be fine." He reassured them all. They looked at his serious face and relaxed, knowing he was right. They watched t.v. together, even when Gibbs fell asleep. They stayed until after his lunch walk, leaving McGee and Ellie with him.

## 21. Gibbs' Guard Dogs

Gibbs was walking better after dinner. McGee stayed in the room to make sure nothing was tampered with. Ellie walked with Gibbs holding his right elbow and an arm around his waist. He made it a full football yard and a half away from the door. They turned back and he shakily walked into the room. He was breathing hard when he lay down. He pressed the pump control three times.

"You alright boss." McGee asked.

"Yep." He said tiredly.

They watched t.v. for a while. Gibbs fell asleep at 11p.m. two hours after dinner. They decided that Ellie would take first shift, letting McGee get some sleep. They each would stay for half a day and switch. That way someone was always alert and someone could sleep if they needed. Ellie had slept from the moment she laid down in her bed at midnight until she an hour before she arrived at 10. Ellie woke McGee up at 8a.m. after he slept for seven hours. McGee got coffee and Breakfast from Gibbs' diner. He got back a half an hour later and Gibbs was still asleep.

"Has he been asleep since I left?" He asked.

"Yeah not even a twitched. Should we wake him up?" She responded.

McGee gave her a smile and set the food down on the tray putting it over him and lifting the bed up at a comfortably angle of 65 degrees. She looked at him confused as he looked amused. He held a hand up. He

put his coffee under his nose and within seconds Gibbs sniffed waking up from a deep sleep. They chuckled as he shifted himself up some with one hand and scooped up the cup as he settled. He took a deep breathe savoring the smell then took a savory gulp, sighing.

"Mmmm, thanks McGee." He said groggily with a small smile.

"Wouldn't want it to get cold." McGee smirked.

"No that would be sacrilege." Ellie joked back with them, getting a tired laugh from Gibbs. They started eating.

"You went to the dinner McGee." He said.

"Lainey said to tell you and I quote, 'keep gettin better sugar, wanna see you soon.' She even pouted slightly, boss." He said. Gibbs gave a full smile in response. They ate and then went for a walk. It went as well as last time, only needing to press the control twice.

"What ya watchin?" he asked.

"Cartoons, there the old Sunday cartoons my favorite." Ellie said smiling.

"Mine too." Gibbs replied with a smile. They watched t.v. all morning. The others smiled when they walked in to them enraptured with the cartoons, they glanced at who entered and re-focused on the t.v. again. They sat down and joined them. When the cartoons ended they turned on a few old western movies. They ate lunch and went for a walk. Ellie stayed behind. He walked slow but slightly steadier. Gibbs went the same distance and returned to bed. He relaxed into the pillows after pressing the control twice. They watched t.v. and Abby laid down next to Gibbs under his fatherly arm like before. They stayed like this until they the others left at 8. They gave Tony, Ellie, and Gibbs hugs. Gibbs and Tony got Kisses from Abby. Gibbs fell asleep a few minutes later Ellie slept while Tony kept watch.

## 22. Exhausting Walks

Three days later, started eating breakfast at 9, enjoyed in easy silence. They went for a walk at 9:30. Ellie and Tony helped Gibbs sit up. He was still a little weaker from the sabotage to his IV. The pain spikes had stopped but he was still worn out. He was leaning slightly towards the pump he was holding tightly. He didn't want to held up so they stayed close, Ellie by his right with Tony by the pump. They walked out the door and down the hall. Gibbs walked down the hall about 1 1/2 football yards. Sitting down on a bench in the hall, he leaned down with a hand on the bench and the other on the pump. Gibbs was sweating and breathing hard.

"You doin' alright?" Ellie asked.

"Yeah, just need a break," he responded.

"Okay, just makin' sure pain's not too bad." Tony said. Gibbs smirked and nodded back.

The others showed up 25 minutes later, at 9:55, poking their heads in the door then looked down the hall. They approached them as Tony and Ellie sat next to him. He got his breath back, leaning back against the wall. Ducky patted his good shoulder. McGee smiled as Abby hugged him, kissing his forehead. She hugged him as she sat down, making Tony scoot over.

"Hey Gibbs, how ya feelin'?" She asked.

"I'm good Abbs. Trying not to overdo it, I'd hate for you to have to kill me leaving no trace." He smirked, sitting back against the wall.

"You know I would."

"Oh, yeah Abbs I know." He responded.

"Jimmy and Brenna relaxing at home?" he asked.

"Yes, Dear Brenna's back has been irritated, with all the errands they've been running."

"Ah, yes make sure he massages her feet and back works every time." Gibbs said with a small, knowing smile. They relaxed with him, joking around.

A few minutes later Gibbs tried to stand up, unable to lift himself up. Tony took his right elbow, Ellie the left armpit and an arm around his waist, gently lifting him up. He gripped the pole tightly, once he was steadily on his feet they let go slowly. Ducky was by Ellie while, McGee and Abby by Tony. They slowly walked to the end of the hall, a total of 3 football yards, one way. They stopped and sat next to him on a bench at the end of the hall. He closed his eyes to rest. They helped him stand up again and they walked 3 football yards back to the room. They took his arms and waist, lifting him gently onto the bed, scooting back and into his pillows. He pressed the control once.

"You okay, boss?" McGee asked.

"Yeah little sore but not bad." They nodded.

He was tired but not enough to sleep; they watched t.v. and joked around. They decided to get lunch at 11:30. They ate, joking and laughing together. He wanted to stay awake but the walk had exhausted him. They smiled as he started drifting off jumping awake slightly.

"Gibbs, get some sleep." Abby said as she hugged him.

"Alright." He sighed. They with left hugs and goodbyes, they left him in the capable hands of Tony and McGee.

"Just relax we got your six."

They were happy to let him sleep until dinner. They woke him up for dinner and they did a shorter walk because he couldn't keep his eyes open. They lifted him unto the bed, bridal style, he was asleep. Gibbs instantly went into a deep sleep. They shared a smile at his peaceful face.

### 23. Watching Eyes

Gibbs woke up at midnight that night. He looked around the room. McGee was dozing on his left facing the wall but close to his bed. None of them fully slept while on protection detail. He slowly looked over the room. As he looked to his right he met Tony's eyes. Tony stood up and leaned over the bed, getting Gibbs' groggy focus.

"You okay?" Gibbs shook his head slightly, waking himself up.

"Feel like I'm being watched." Tony nodded'.

"Okay, don't worry we have your six."

"Yeah boss." McGee said wide awake despite their whispering. Gibbs smiled proudly at his senses.

"The blinds to the hallway window are open. I only see nurses. Not even doctors. The wood doors shut."

"Ah, those blinds aren't all the way. Sorry boss." McGee said and closed them.

"S'alright M'Gee." He replied sleepily.

"Feeling still there?" he asked, getting a head shake. They sat down in their chairs, relaxed but alert.

"Okay, sleep boss. Like Tony said we've got your six." McGee said. It was an answer of his trust in itself that he just went into an almost immediately deep sleep.

They stayed up all night to tag team to insure his safety. They had learned to trust Gibbs feelings, kept them from getting shot enough times to trust it, going on high alert when the 6th senses flared. The others walked in, including Jimmy and Brenna at 9:30a.m, surprised at his snoring body.

"Is he okay?" Abby whispered.

"Yeah, got a warning last night." They looked troubled.

"He felt eyes on him." McGee said. Now they were concerned and afraid.

They smiled at Gibbs as he snorted and scratched his nose, turning on his left side, an arm under his head. He looked very comfortable being stretched out. They chuckled at his grumble as he went back into a deep sleep.

"He really does let his guard down around us." Brenna said.

"Yes he happens feels safe around family." Ducky said and they nodded.

She and Jimmy sat on the couch/bench against the hall window, only a foot away from the bed. Abby and McGee sat there two, Abby deemed it close enough to Gibbs. McGee sunk into the cushions as Abby leaned

against him. Tony sat on the left by his head the side of his chair against the bed and the other against Ellie's chair. Ducky was by the foot on that side facing them. While Gibbs slept they read. They didn't want to talk and risk interrupting his sleep. Ellie had one headset in listening to music while she read a book. McGee read a Nat-Geo magazine, while Tony read a sports magazine. Ducky was reading an old detective novel. Abby was reading a scientist monthly magazine. They stay like this for almost an hour. Gibbs woke up with a snorted snore and groggily blinked his eyes to see his smiling family seated around him, at 10:15. He turned over and used his arm to sit up some. He lifted the bed as they turned their chairs, angling towards the t.v. and him.

"Hey" he said groggily.

"Hey Gibbs," Abby smiled as she hugged him. Ellie mirrored her.

"What time s'it" he asked.

"you woke up at 10:15 on the dot. Now, why am I not surprise me?" he asked rhetorically, getting a smirk.

"How are you, Gibbs" Brenna said.

"No changeâ€|thought I told ya to call me Gibbs."

"Ya did but we were thinkingâ€|Dad would be better." Gibbs smiled wildly as he initiated their hug.

"I'd love that kid." He said kissing her cheek. "I'd love that." He repeated, he shook Jimmy's hand, pulling into a hug. Jimmy made sure not to land on him.

They could tell Gibbs was teary eyed but just smiled at him. He got gentle pats on the shoulder from Tony, Tim, and Ducky. Abby and Ellie hugged him again. They sat back down and joked, going on like this until Gibbs tried to reach over himself, he squeezed his eyes shut and held his breathe.

"You okay?" Tony asked.

"Yeah" He responded.

"What do you need dad." Everyone saw Gibbs pause. They got worried a minute went by.

"I'm sorry if it's too painful, or fresh, or unreal orâ€|" His babbling was interrupted by Gibbs hand on his shoulder. He smiled at him.

"Just hard to get used to, again. I'm really happy, not too painful, or fresh or anything, promise"

"Oh, that's good." Jimmy relaxed smiling. Gibbs smiled at his worry, relaxing into his pillows wincing.

"What did you need, dad?" there was no pause, just a smile.

"Phone" He said.

"Why?" Brenna asked.

"I'm hungry, Bree."

"Well you did miss Breakfast mister." She replied in mock sternness.

He playfully held up his hands, mocking worried face. Everyone laughed as she gently slapped his elbow, handing him the phone with a fond smile. They ordered lunch. They relaxed while eating lunch; he savored his morning coffee as usual, taking a big gulp, sighing in content. They went on their usual walk.

#### 24. Danger

Gibbs woke up at 2a.m. with a slight jolt. The pain was rapidly getting worse. He looked around for the pump. It was on the table. Before he could reach for it Tony spoke.

"You feel eyes on you again?" Tony asked worriedly.

"No."

"What is it?" Ellie asked.

"M' ribs n' abdomenâ€| armâ€|n' shoulderâ€|getting' kinda bad." He mumbled

"How bad?" Tony asked.

"eightâ€|seven n' halfâ€|six and halfâ€|n' seven." They looked at the morphine pump. They were shocked to see it was on a barely nonexistent setting.

"We haven't left the room empty. Who messed with it?" Ellie asked.

"Connery probably posed as a doc. used the confusion early yesterday, got to the control in the nurse's station." Gibbs said.

"The nurses have control." Tony said.

"Yeah probably" Tony said. Ellie went to check with the nurses.

"The nurses said they saw a 'new' doctor matching Henry Connery description. Told them to tell us next time they see them." He said, getting a sigh from Gibbs.

"Great." Tony said sarcastically.

"You'll get him. I know you well enough." Gibbs told them. Tony raised an eyebrow in a Gibbs-like look.

"Come on Tony you're working the case. It'll take me a while before I could even look at you're reports without the others killing me and hiding the body, even if I could."

"I guarantee you'll be on it."

"No he won't." Tobias and the other's walked in.

"It's my jurisdiction besides. We looked at all of your homes and found bugs and booby traps."

"Well, that sucks. I still want a piece of him."

"We all do DiNutzo." He replied. They looked at Gibbs.

"Better you're all safe than risk your lives." He told them they sighed.

"You're all staying in a single floor safe house. The rooms are in the back, three on the right side and two on the left. The three rooms on the right: closest to the front will have DiNozzo, twin bed, next two twins for Jethro and Ducky, the last one has a queen for Brenna and Palmer. The left the front's a twin for Ellie next a queen for McGee and Abby." There are only a few houses, limited on rooms, this one had the most. Jethro's one condition is you'd all be in the same place. Has a good sized kitchen and living room." Tobias told them.

"We wouldn't want dad anywhere else." Brenna said, the others nodded smiling slightly.

"What?" Tobias asked. They explained and Tobias patted his shoulder.

"You all will stay there except two of you. You'll be in this room while two of my agents stay outside. They've been briefed and if they make even the slightest mistake their gone." They all nodded.

He left their lunch from the diner. They enjoyed their meal, watching t.v. and talking. They nodded at the two agents posted out the door; they recognized them and know their good, trusted agents. He didn't have help except from the pump and to stand up from the benches. They went on a walk, the same distance and stops. They went back to the room. He crawled up into the bed without help. He was exhausted and started dozing off. They said goodbye and he fell asleep in seconds. They said goodbye.

"Focus on getting better." Ducky said hugging him.

"Yeah, you've said yourself that their competent." Jimmy said.

"I know. I'm focused on my health." Gibbs responded.

"Good" Tony said.

"Love you dad" Abby and Brenna said simultaneously, kissing a cheek each.

They had their usual walk with Gibbs after dinner. Ellie and McGee were both able to leave the room, with the agents there. They walked slowly and steadily. Gibbs was holding his ribs bent forward slightly with Ellie's arm around his waist and a hand on his elbow. They walked back to the room nodding to the agents again. He relaxed into his pillows and pressed the pump four times.

"Get some good rest tonight. We have you're six. Take the amount you need." After a while he pressed it again twice.

"I know I trust you. Thought that was all I needed." He responded slightly raspy. They smiled.

She kept an alert eye out as McGee got some sleep, well dozing technically. They felt better having another line of defense but they were not going to lose focus for even a second. That way Gibbs could relax, heal and get stronger. They didn't want him to have to feel like he had to protect himself.

## 25. Safety House

\*\*(Brenna is only like a month pregnant in this story.)\*\*

It was the same pattern for the next week. Gibbs morphine pump was not messed with. The rest of the week was actually very quiet. It only made them suspicious. Gibbs had, as promised focused on his health. They went on their walks and joked around. Gibbs had been there for six weeks. The sabotage had set back his recover. He had to momentarily go on shorter walks but they were able to slowly get him back to his longer walks. It was 9:30. The entire family was there. They had gotten a call; they were just waiting for him to wake up. The doctor walked in just as Gibbs grunted as he shifted slightly in bed. He woke up to the usual greetings of hugs and kisses. He looked to the doctor.

"Hey, doc." He said.

"Hello Jethro." He smiled. Gibbs raised an eyebrow as he looked around at their smiling faces.

"What ya got doc."

"I'm letting you go home. Under strict restrictions." He said. Gibbs nodded seriously, letting them know he understood and would follow them.

"You cannot lift anything, bend, walk long distances, or exercise. You will do as well as you have been with asking for help. You will relax and let them watch your six. You will relax and let them watch your six. You will not go all cowboy style on them. You know that if their distracted it's a danger to all." They knew the last sentence got him.

"Yeah doc I got it." He promised.

They helped him stand up and got him into the wheelchair. They got him to the van. The FBI agents took them to the secluded safety house. They met Tobias at the door and he led them to the living room, briefing them.

"There will be two guards in the house, two in the back, sides, and the front. Also two in a car parked hidden in the trees." They nodded in response.

There was a wall between the entrance and living room. There are two

long and wide couches, two recliners, a coffee table and a t.v. and a round table. One couch was against the wall and another perpendicular to it with a round table between. The recliners were on the ends of each couch. The kitchen was half the size of the living room, about 3 football yards. There was a small wall between the living room and kitchen, there was no dining room. The t.v. sat tucked in that corner. There was fridge, sink, counter top the length of three cabinets. The sink was in the middle. The fridge was on one side and the dish washer on the other. The bedrooms only had beds with two cream pillows, cream sheets, a cream comforter, and a light brown blanket.

"Nice place, better than most." Gibbs said.

"Only the best for yours." Tobias said.

"Thanks." He said sincerely, getting a small smile.

"yeah we really are grateful." Tony sat as he helped Gibbs sit and lean over.

They laid him down on the couch by the one wall with a pillow and wrapped him in a blanket. He was in pain and too tired to make it to the bedroom. Ellie, McGee, Abby, Jimmy and Brenna sat on the other. The two couples were cuddling, Ellie on the edge by Gibbs. Tony was on the recliner by Gibbs and Ducky in the other. They were all relaxed feet up; they let their guards down for once being fully covered. They would be ready to fight if necessary but in the mean time they were completely relaxed. The guards in side were in two chairs, one by the front and back doors. They ate their other meals and helped Gibbs walk through the house. After Dinner they watched in the living room he had a hand on the wall and shuffled into his room. he laid down and was asleep in seconds. They went to bed an hour later. They were glad Gibbs could sleep here. They were able to relax because they became accustomed already after about five days. They all slept deeply that night, happy to be together and watch over each other. They didn't have to worry about how the others were.

## 26. Guards On The Ready

The next morning saw Tony and McGee stumbling out of their rooms. They walked bleary eyed into the living room. Brenna was making pancakes, toast, and eggs. Abby's making sausage and bacon. Ellie and Gibbs were sitting in the middle of the couch by the window watching morning cartoons. Ducky was sitting in the recliner by the window, reading. They were leaning back into the cushions with their feet on the coffee table. They smiled at the view.

"You ever imagine seeing a domesticated Gibbs." Jimmy said.

"Nope" Tony and McGee said.

You mean you have?" McGee asked the girls.

"Yes" they said simultaneously, looking at them like they were idiots.

"Call it female intuition." Ellie said and Gibbs laughed.

"Get used to it Jimmy boy, Tim. That's always the answer." He said with a smirk. He had a sling on today. His ribs had been taped by Ducky. Tony, McGee, and Jimmy sat down on the other couch.

"Seems kinda old fashioned having the girls cook." Tony joked.

"We insisted since Ducky cooked breakfast and lunch." Brenna said.

"â€¦and we had to have Ellie all but sit on him to get him to relax." Abby finished her thought.

"It's true."

"Ah, I wouldn't be me if I weren't persistent and stubborn." He said with a smile that made him look like a kid.

"True and we love you the way you are." Abby said kissing his cheek as she handed him his food. Brenna handed Jimmy, Ducky and Tony theirs. Abby handed Gibbs, Ellie, and McGee theirs. Abby sat next to McGee, Tony in the middle, with Jimmy and Brenna on the end. They started eating.

"Mhm it's good." Gibbs said. They smiled at him.

"Thanks dad." Brenna said making him grin. They enjoyed their meal.

"I think it's only fair if McGee and Jim clean up." Gibbs smirked as the others chuckled.

They did pick up the plates and wash them. They came back out as Ellie help him up. He paced between the kitchen and living room, sitting down when he tired. They watched cartoons for a while. Gibbs dozed off at one point, head against the back of the couch. They covered him with a blanket. He woke from his nap an hour later. When the morning cartoons ended they switched to comedies. A few hours after lunch they were listening to the t.v. and reading. Abby had the latest scientist's technology monthly magazine, and Tony had a sports magazine, Ducky a detective novel, Gibbs a Marine biography. Ellie and McGee had technological advancement books. Jimmy and Brenna were reading baby books; she's about two months pregnant. Gibbs stretched carefully, settling into the cushions more, they chuckled. They were enjoying the silence. A few minutes later it's interrupted by soft snoring.

Tony shook him gently, "let's move to the bed." He said smirking. He helped him into his bed. He slept until dinner. He ate and went back to sleep, joining him shortly after. They slept well that night as well. They were able to relax with their guards on stand by. but they fully relaxed nonetheless.

## 27. A Restless Gibbs

Gibbs woke up before anyone else. He knew because whoever was up, stayed in his room until he woke up to help him up. He took his watch of the table and looked at it. 5a.m. it was early but he would wake up at this time periodically, especially on cases. Sometimes he didn't get to sleep until know and wake up at 8, going into work wide

awake. He turned over, using the small dresser to lever himself up. He pulled himself up slowly. Hissing as he got his feet under him. He opened the dresser drawers and got underwear, baggy jeans, an old NIS tee, and his black Marine sweatshirt. All of their casual clothing had been brought over. They each had a bathroom attached to their rooms; slowly walking past Dicky he entered it. He took a hot shower and hit the 'head'. He exited the bathroom and picked up his holster. He quietly checked his weapon and holstered it on his hip. He walked out of the room. He nodded to the FBI agents on both of the recliners by the couches. He sat on the couch under the window, next to the table.

"What ya watchin'?" he asked the guards.

"Early morning cartoons." Gibbs nodded.

"Not surprised you have your gun on ya. Wearing a backup?"

"Na loaned it to Abbs." They nodded smirking. He put his feet up, leaning into the cushions.

Ducky came out, wearing a NCIS sweat shirt, and black NCIS sweat pants. He was very cute, clothes too big. He made tea and brought the cups out, handing Gibbs his. He sat on Gibbs left, putting his feet up.

"Lookin good Duck" He said.

"Yes thank you for the sweat shirt, Jethro." He responded.

Tony, Ellie, McGee, and Abby started their day off the same. The agents holster their guns as well. Ellie was wearing an umpire waist cream long sleeve shirt. The waist had a light brown leather braided belt and light blue jeans. Tony had an Ohio Alumni tee, black jeans, and a plain blank belt. McGee had a MIT Alumni tee, dark blue jeans, and a black belt. Abby had a knee length plaid skirt, a black tee with skull and cross bones, a spiked collar and stud earrings. She decided to leave the gun on the dresser. They walked out of their rooms and sat on the couch. Ellie and Tony to Gibbs right. Ellie was next to Gibbs, Tony by the table. Abby and McGee sat on the other couch.

"You look adorable Duckman." Abby said hugging him and sitting back down.. They chuckled at his look.

"Borrow some of Gibbs clothes Duck." McGee said. He nodded.

Jimmy and Brenna came out and she kissed his forehead and hugged him. They sat next to Abby, cuddling. They watched t.v. while Tony and McGee made breakfast. They made pancakes, eggs, thick ham slices, sausage patties, and fresh orange juice. They enjoyed breakfast and watched t.v. Gibbs was walking around the outside of the house alone, save for the FBI agents. He came in and relaxed into the cushions. They had moved Brenna and Ellie switched places, as well as Tony and Jimmy.

"Was your walk good?" Jimmy asked.

"Yeah getting' easier." He replied.

"That's really good, dad." Brenna squeezed his bicep that was in the sling. He nodded.

They watched t.v. for a few hours. They made a futile attempt to argue with Gibbs. He was making them all lunch, grilled chicken/ham cheese (thick slices), and homemade tomato soup.

"Jethro you need to relax."

"I am" He said as he flipped the sandwiches. They looked dubiously at him.

"What, it relaxes me."

"Cooking or providing for your family?" Jimmy asked. Gibbs just looked at him, his only emotion showing through was slight amusement.

"So did giving you permission to call me dad give you balls?" everyone laughed and Gibbs lost the fight and smiled.

"Na just gave me your biological confidence, Dad!" He said straight faced but they all ended up laughing. Gibbs shook his head fondly.

"It is in my genes." He joked back, feigning seriousness. They laughed as he brought and set their food down. They watched a few funny movies all afternoon. Gibbs only had to walk after two meals. He had chosen to relax, after lunch. A little after 4 the others were distracted with books, t.v., or in the bathroom. He snuck into the kitchen and used beer for his cowboy style steak. It took a few minutes for them to notice and the FBI agents chuckled.

"JETHRO." Ducky said loudly.

Gibbs looked over with his most innocent face. "What?"

"One you're cooking again. Two, you refuse to take doctor's advice, Ducky and mine, in relaxing."

"Yeah yeah, I get Jimmy. But I am relaxing." He said with an innocent smile.

"Oh never mind." He said.

"What's for dinner?" Abby asked as he squatted putting the steak on the grate in the fireplace, beside the television.

"Cowboy steak, mashed potatoes, and corn."

A few minutes later Dinner was done a few minutes later. They ate and joked around. Gibbs went for a walk. They went to bed an hour after that.

## 28. Healing and Normalcy

McGee, Abby, Jimmy and Brenna woke up to the smell of bacon cooking. They dressed in casual clothes. Brenna had a light silk beige sweater that flared on the sides and black, form fitting sweats. Jimmy has a

blue tee and black jeans. Abby was wearing a light grey cotton sweater with Einstein's head, and black sweats. McGee was wearing a MIT tee and baggy NCIS sweats. They walked out into the living room. Ducky had a tee shirt and sweats. Ellie had on a black halter-top long sleeve shirt and dark grey sweats. Tony had NCIS sweats. They looked into the kitchen, sighing simultaneously. Gibbs was cooking in his red sweatshirt and grey sweats, making his famous pancakes, eggs, and bacon.

"You really need to learn how to relax, Gibbs" McGee told him.

"Ah, I'll go outta my mind just sitting not doing anything. Let me do this for ya." He replied eating a piece of bacon.

"yeah, yeah." Jimmy said.

They ate, watching old cartoons, their morning ritual. Tony made popcorn, throwing it at McGee.

"Stop it Tony."

"Op it ony. He repeated childishly.

So naturally they got into a popcorn fight. They got Abby and Ellie in on it. They were on the ends of each couch. Ducky watching with fond exasperation from the far recliner while Jimmy and Brenna in the other. Soon Jimmy and Brenna were cheering for opposite sides. Gibbs walked in from his walk and they all froze. Gibbs walked over with a stern face, eyebrow raised. He bent down painfully taking a piece of popcorn of the coffee table. He sat down in the recliner by the window. He turned with a leg bend against the arm, facing them. They turned and were parallel to him. Tony was across from him, Abby curled into McGee. By Gibbs were Jimmy, Brenna, and then Ellie. Suddenly threw it, it bounced off of Tony's forehead. They all stared shocked.

"Hey." Tony playfully complained.

"Hey they need help." He smirked throwing another at Abby. They went on for a while until Gibbs was gasping and holding his ribs from laughing. He still had a big smile on his face. Everyone was crying from laughing. Gibbs felt a pain flare and grimaced, stopped smiling.

"You okay?" Brenna asked. They stopped smiling as he grimaced.

"Yeah, probably shouldn't have bent down or thrown popcorn." He smirked.

"I must say it was not you brightest moment, dear lad." Ducky said, chuckling at his pout.

"Ah, Duck I've had worse moments." They laughed.

They relaxed, doing nothing as they listened to the t.v. or in Ellie and Abby case music. They even traded books when they were finished.

"Hey Ellie you done reading yet." McGee asked.

"Yeah, what book you got?" Ellie said.

"New Tech advancement." He responded.

"I have Firewall stabilizing." They traded.

Gibbs coughed saying, "geeks." He smirked at their scowled smirks.

"Hey Duck?" He asked, lazily turning his head, back against the arm, legs bent, curled in a blanket.

"Yes, Jethro." He looked at him.

"What ya readin'?" he asked.

"Murder of Governor Nick." He said.

"Read it."

"I'm reading Endurance." Jimmy said.

"Been wantin' to read that, Marine Biography switch?" They did.

Brenna and Ducky switched their Detective books. They started reading again. They enjoyed the silence. Jimmy and Brenna where curled on the end of the couch by the window, next to Ducky. No one was by Gibbs. The next couch had Abby and McGee curled by the table. Bishop curled on the end, sitting like Gibbs. Tony and Ducky sat with their feet up reclined. They enjoyed the fireplace. Gibbs fell asleep, arms sliding down, book in his hands. They smiled as he shuffled slightly in his sleep.

"What are we having for dinner?" Tony asked.

"Fornel is making us pizza." Gibbs replied.

"Wait making?" Ellie asked.

"He wanted to do something nice. Don't tell him I said that." Gibbs said smirking.

Brenna scooted over slightly shushing him as he slid down, he snorted awake. She turned him slightly, putting his head in her lap. He nodded relaxing instantly remembering they were in a safe house and could let his guard down. They smiled at that fact, clear as day because he went into a deep sleep. He curled into a ball, fixing his blanket.

"He's been so tired lately. Is he okay?" Ellie asked concerned.

"Yeah it is from the healing." Jimmy said.

"Yes, it does take a lot of energy just to heal, especially with the pain spikes he has had." At their reassurance they nodded and relaxed.

Tobias showed up at 8p.m. with the pizza. They complemented his cooking. They joked and laughed. Gibbs kept dozing off they wordlessly decided, having to stop every few seconds that the walk wouldn't be of any use.

"Jethro let's skip your walk and get you to bed." Jimmy said, getting a nod.

He helped him stand. The others showered, went to the bathroom, and brushed their teeth. They He helped him walk to the bed. He guided his descent because he was almost unconscious. The others watched his care, helping him under the blankets. He's asleep before his head hits the pillow.

## 29. Missed Meds

A few days later Tony, Ducky, and Ellie were against Ducky's headboard. Abby and McGee were sitting on the bottom, cross legged and cuddling. Jimmy and Brenna were cuddled against the headboard next to Tony. Gibbs back was to them but they saw him curl into the blanket tighter. They were concerned he had slept in more than ever. It was 10 in the morning. Jimmy got up suddenly. They watched confused as his brow creased. Jimmy sped up his steps and they followed him, standing against the wall. Jimmy felt his forehead, getting a soft groan as Gibbs leaned into it.

"Can you grab your bag?" He did. Jimmy took out a thermometer, putting it in his mouth. As he waited for results Jimmy took his pulse.

"Can you check his pulse, doctor?" He asked Ducky.

"It is still quite normal."

"Thought so just wanted to double check." The thermometer went off. "102.5" the others sighed. Jimmy sat on the edge of the bed, his knees bent to mid stomach.

"Dadâ€|Dad" He repeated softly. Gibbs sniffled slightly getting a few small smiles.

"Dad, can you wake up for me?" Brenna asked putting his head in her lap. His eyes fluttered and he groaned, curling up tighter. He was shaking slightly.

"Come on Gibbs, wake up." Abby said kneeling by the bed, smoothing back his hair. He groaned slightly.

"That's it open your eyes." Jimmy said. Gibbs did but his gaze was foggy and unfocused.

"Hey you have a fever." He said, getting a slight nod. He blinked a few times, clearing his vision. His eyes cleared only leaving a slightly fevered gaze.

"How bad" Gibbs asked.

"102.5" Jimmy answered, adding another blanket to him.

"Have you been taking your meds, Jethro?" Ducky asked.

"I forgot to yesterday and the day before but otherwise yes." They nodded.

"Did you miss both doses?"

"Both times" he responded.

"Okay, explains the fever, it'll take a few days go away but you'll be fine." Jimmy said, getting a nod.

They smiled at him as he struggled to stay awake. He yawned. he suddenly struggled to get up. He couldn't get up further then his elbow.

"What is it?" Abby asked.

"Move" he mumbled.

She understood and put the trash can under his chin. He instantly leaned over and puked violently for several seconds, Brenna and Jimmy rubbed his back. They just comforted him as he struggled to breathe between the heaves, coming fast. Ellie got a wet wash cloth for his mouth. McGee got cold ones for his head and neck. They walked in and everyone winced in sympathy as he gagged, dry heaving; hurting just hearing it. They laid him back onto his left, covering him up. Ellie wiped his mouth then sat down. McGee dabbed at the sheen of sweat, setting them on his neck and forehead each.

"Thanks" he croaked. They nodded. Tony walked in with a water bottle.

"Small sips." Tony warned.

He lifted his head slightly, helping him drink; Brenna held the cloths in place. He pulled back after a minute; Brenna set his head on the pillow. Tony and Ellie sat against the headboard on each side of his head. Jimmy and McGee brought recliners in. Jimmy and Brenna curled in one, Abby and McGee in the other, reclined. Ducky sat in a recliner already between their beds. He was almost completely asleep.

"Could this be why he's still so tired?" Ellie asked.

"This combined with his resent complications, yes." Ducky said.

They relax keeping him company until Gibbs woke up three hours later. He snorted, blinking his eyes open.

"Hey sleepy head." Brenna said brushing his hair away, as Tony and Ellie help him sit up slowly.

"Fevers down, how're you feeling?" Jimmy asked checking his temperature.

"lil woozyâ€|nauseousâ€|cold" he told them."

Jimmy nodded, "to be expected."

"You comfortable?" Abby said.

"Wanna go to the couch." Ha said, Tony and Ellie helped him turn and put his legs over the edge.

Tony stood up and walked into the living room, the others were already there. He put a pillow and blankets on the couch by the wall, sitting by the recliner. The other couch was Jimmy and Brenna by the table curled under a blanket, Abby and McGee were curled on the end. Ducky had his feet up in the recliner. Meanwhile, Ellie had put her arm around him as he regained his breath after sitting up. She put his good left arm over her shoulders, hers around his waist. She carefully lifting him up as they stood. They walked out and Abby lifted his blankets. She held him up as Brenna wrapped him in one and then sat him down. She fluffed his two pillows and laid him down as he clutched his blanket ends under his chin. Then Abby covered him with two and sat by his feet, the couch big enough to still stretch out. They watched t.v.; he sleeping in their company, until they woke him for lunch and dinner, skipping his walk.

### 30. Exhaustion and Night Chacks

They were eating dinner. Brenna and Abby sat on each side of him. McGee and Jimmy curled by their girlfriend/wife, as they shared bowls. Tony and Ellie ate sitting on the couch by the table, with their feet up. Ducky sat by them. They looked over and not really surprised he snorted awake, struggling not to fall asleep. His head started hanging again and he'd jerk awake. They smiled slightly as he struggled to wake up enough to eat. The others were eating spaghetti with meatballs and cheesy bread. He was eating chicken and rice soup that Abby had made for him that morning. It had chicken, rice, carrots, and broccoli. The regular broth had a little garlic powder. He leaned into the cushions, trying to keep his eyes open. They others finished their last bites as he set down the three quarter full bowl.

"Is that all you can eat?" Brenna asked rubbing his shoulder slightly.

He nodded. "Just to tired."

"it's okay" she put his head on her shoulder. Abby rubbed his back. The boys turned and wrapped their hands around them; Jimmy around Brenna and McGee around Abby. He started falling asleep.

"Let's get you to bed." Abby said. Jimmy helped him stand up, still wrapped in one blanket. They laid him down, settling him down under two blankets.

"I am going to check your temperature." Ducky said, it beeped a few minutes later.

Jimmy took it out, smiling, "101.4, it's lower than it has been all day." they all smiled and Gibbs just blinked trying to stay awake.

McGee helped him take a few sips of orange juice. He pulled back out after a few seconds and McGee gently laid his head back. He was obviously exhausted, almost completely asleep, blinking his eyes

slowly. He tried to turn onto his left but didn't have the strength. Tony was sitting behind him and helped him turn over.

"I'm going to inject your meds, okay Jethro." Gibbs blearily nodded. He was on syringe meds three times a day, in the morning when he woke up, at noon, and after dinner. He struggled slightly to get his arm left out from under the blankets

"Here" Brenna helped him. Then she recovered it as Abby and McGee covered him with the beige comforter.

"Thanks." He said and they smiled.

They knew his weakness was from the almost constant puking and his fever. While, it didn't worry or concerned them it did make them feel the need to protect him. They want to help out as much as they possibly could.

"One of us should check your temperature a few times tonight." Jimmy said.

"No you all need to keep getting your full sleep at night." He said tiredly but the impatient tone came through loud and clear.

"Jethro!" he said annoyed but only to get interrupted.

"If you all sleep I'll allow Duck to look me over. But only if you also get sleep in between the temp checks." They looked at each other and nodded back at him.

"It will let me relax better knowing you're all well rested." He said.

"Are you just trying to guilt trip us?" McGee asked with a smirk.

"No" he said and they saw the worry in his eyes. "You need your rest after everything that's happened. Especially in your condition Brenna, sweetie." They smiled at his small smile.

"Okay, I promise." McGee and Abby said simultaneously.

"Same" Jimmy, Brenna, and Ellie said. Tony nodded.

"I agree Jethro." Ducky responded.

They said goodnight, the girls hugged and kissed him good night. The boys just smiled and they went to bed. They all kept their promises. The others slept the entire night, while Ducky slept in between his checks. It stayed the same because of the meds. Ducky set his alarm on a quieter sound as to not wake up Gibbs. He uncovered his arm and he shivered slightly from the chills. He groggily opened his eyes and Ducky smiled slightly at Ducky's fatherly care in his eyes.

"Last check" Ducky said softly, getting a nod.

"I'm just gonna check your blood pressure." He picked up his arm carefully and slipped the cuff on his bicep, shifting him slightly and carefully on his back. He squeezed the pump a few times.

"Blood pressures normal." He said and took his pulse, "also normal."

"Kay" he said sleepily.

"Open up" Gibbs did and closed it around the thermometer.

"101.3" Gibbs nodded and fell asleep as he was covered back up. Ducky smoothed it back and went back to sleep. They all slept peacefully that night.

### 31. Sleepy

Gibbs woke up at 9 a.m. and Ducky helped him sit up. After resting for a few minutes he lifted him up and helped him walk into the Bathroom. He walked out in new sweats. Grey sweat pants that says Marine down the right pant leg and his red Marine sweatshirt. He wore an NIS tee, over a black long-sleeved shirt, obviously freezing. They walked out into the living room, together. Jimmy and Brenna were cuddled in the recliner beside the window, with Abby and McGee in the other. Tony sat on the couch by the wall and Ellie on the other end; both sideways with their backs against the armrests and legs stretched out. Ducky sat like them but his back to the table against Gibbs feet, under the window. Gibbs sat down curled in a blanket on the couch under the window. He sat with his legs bent and his left side pressed into the couch and his back against the armrest, resting his head sideways against the back. They smiled at his tired but peaceful look. Ducky got his meds and injected them.

"Sleep well?" he asked them.

"Yep" Abby and McGee said together.

"Like a baby." Tony said. The other's nodded.

"Jethro, slept like a rock. He hardly stayed awake after I told him I was only just checking him." They smiled as Ducky and Gibbs.

They watched t.v. and relaxed, not doing much. While the others ate omelets, hash, and toast he just ate Abby's soup. He ate a little less than half of the small bowl. He put it down on the table and curled up more under the blanket. They looked over concerned at the barely eaten food. They noticed his shaking, had a thin sheet of sweat, and looked like he was about to puke. Brenna got up and felt his forehead, sitting next to him and Ducky's feet.

"You're really warm." She said concernedly.

Ducky handed her the thermometer of the coffee table. He opened his mouth without opening his mouth she put it in his mouth and gently closed it. She put his head on her shoulder, an arm around his shoulders and the other rubbing his back. The thermometer beeped and she handed it to Ducky.

"102.8"he informed them.

Tony got a few cold wet wash cloths. He gave them to Ellie sat on the armrest and she laid one on his forehead and the side of his head so

it didn't get Brenna wet. She laid the other one down on the side of his neck. McGee got him orange juice and gave it to Brenna. He was curled and wrapped in a blanket and he started trying to un-wrap his arms. She laid a hand on his crossed wrists.

He turned his fevered eyes to her, "I got it dad." He nodded.

She held it to his lips and tipped it back slightly. He drank a little, after a few sips he pulled back and they saw some of it had spilled on his chin. They chuckled at this because it was like he was a kid. Ellie grabbed a napkin and leaned over the table handing it to Brenna. She wiped it off for him.

"I can do it." He said and grunted. They chuckled.

"Practice" She smiled at his smirk.

"I'll allow it this once." He smiled. They chuckled.

His eyes drooped, yawning he was completely exhausted. They smiled, he tried to keep his eyes open.

"Just sleep, dad." Jimmy said as he sat with his back against the back of the couch.

Brenna and he shifted him so Brenna was curled in Jimmy's arms and Gibbs was in front of her but towards the middle of them. His legs were curled in between both of their curled once. He was leaned back with his left side against Brenna and those both cradled into his arms. She was leaned against his front and Jimmy had both of them in his arms.

"This is backwards." At their confused looks he elaborated, "the dad holds the kids when their sick." He smirked.

"Oh, suck it up and accept our love." Jimmy said and they chuckled, while Gibbs fully laughed. He ended up coughing violently.

"Easy, wasn't that funny." He said.

"No. But boy did you get balls after I gave you permission to call me dad." They all laughed.

Gibbs started shivering more, Jimmy gave him the thermometer, 103.2. Tony rewet the cloths, setting them back on him. Gibbs groaned slightly at the coolness as they used another to periodically dab at his forehead.

"Can I get another blanket?"

Ellie handed them one. Jimmy lifted him up slightly and Brenna wrapped it around him. She made sure it was tucked around him.

"Is that better?" Brenna asked.

"Some" he answered. She pulled him closer and they wrapped him tighter in their arms. "Thanks" he said in response.

"Anything for you." They said.

They watched t.v. as Gibbs slept. They read and quietly joked around, he didn't stir. He woke up three hours later at 12. Jimmy and Brenna helped him shift to the side, still curled in the blankets.

"Here Gibbs" Abby handed him a bowl of soup. He thanked her, noticing they're also eating soup. He ate half they got him to bed to finish his nap.

"Let's get you to bed so you can finish your nap." He nodded and they dropped him off to bed, returning to their activities.

### 32. Puking

Gibbs woke up four hours into his nap. He leaned over the bed with all his strength and violently puked into his trash can. The others heard him and went running in. Jimmy and Brenna curled against one side of him, Abby and McGee on the other. They rubbed his back. Tony and Ellie knelt on each side of the trash can, holding it for him. Ducky got him a wet wash cloth. He had puked bile for about a minute, the last two was just dry heaving. When he stopped he was being held up by Jimmy and McGee while the girls rubbed his back. He was clutching his stomach. He hung his head, panting.

"I think your stomachs empty, is there anything else?" Tony asked gently.

"No" he croaked barely audible.

"Do you still feel violently sick?" Jimmy asked, getting a nod.

"Yes" he croaked.

"Well, Tony's right all you really puked was bile." Ducky asked.

"Okay were gonna lay you on your side, by the edge in case you need to throw up." Tony said.

He nods as they eased him down gently. Ducky, Brenna, and Ellie help twist his body to the side and down from the front. McGee gently pushed over from the back. Jimmy and Tony shifted his legs so he was on his side, towards the edge. Abby scooted up and sat cross legged, pillow over her lap. They noticed the heat and shared a concerned look. Ducky came back and gave the cloth to Abby. She dabbed his face and laid it over his forehead. She squeezed the other over his heavily chapped lips.

"You want to change your clothes?" Tony asked, getting a slight nod. Gibbs started struggling to sit up.

"No, no we got it. The girls will step out and McGee, Ducky and I will help." Gibbs sighed and nodded.

The girls stepped out closing the door. Tony got him a long sleeve shirt and sweat pants, he walked over. Ducky pulled the blankets back. Without sitting him up or standing himself, McGee slid one hand under one sweatshirt side and the other on the opposite. He pulled it up carefully and over his head. Tony slid the sweat shirt off his

arms. Tony did the same as McGee but with the tee and long sleeved shirt. Ducky gently pulled them off his arms. Then Tony and Ducky grabbed his pants on each side, Ducky the underside and Tony the upper. McGee pushed gently on his shoulder to keep him still as they pulled with minimal jerking. Then they both slid his sweatpants up to mid-thigh.

"Can you lift?" Tony asked. Gibbs did very slightly and they pulled them up.

"Okay McGee's gonna hold you up a little." Tony said.

McGee had one arm under his side and the other over both elbows. Jimmy knelt by his head and lifted his shoulders, a hand holding his head up. They slid the long sleeved shirt over his arms and head. As they slid the shirt down his body McGee shifted his upper arm down more. After he was covered completely by the shirt, they put on the sweatshirt. They laid him down and covered him up.

"Cold?" Tony asked as he shivered more. He nodded, after seeing it had only gone up about .3 degrees, Ducky and McGee covered him with a blanket over the sheet and a comforter.

"Better?" Gibbs nodded at Ducky.

"Do you need anything else?" Jimmy asked.

"Juice" he croaked, shrugging slightly.

"Alright, sit tight I'll get it." Jimmy said. He walked out to get it and let the girls in.

He came back with a small cup of soup and a cup of orange juice. It took a few minutes but he ate it all and the juice. Ducky sat beside him and rubbed his back. McGee sat along him with Abby tucked in his side under his arm rubbing her bicep, the other hand rubbing Gibbs' back. Ellie sat with her legs stretched, bucket in her lap, and her hand running through his sweat soaked hair, from the last fever break. Tony and Jimmy sat by his feet in recliners. His feet were close to his butt, knees mid stomach. Tony laid a hand on his foot and Jimmy hand one on his ankle. Brenna sat by Gibbs knees, rubbing his arm slowly and gently. Tony brought in the t.v., moving the dresser sideways into the view of everyone and set it down. A few minutes later they checked his temperature. Ducky handed Brenna the thermometer.

"Hey, dad can you open your mouth." Brenna asked gently and his mouth opened a very small amount, he was struggling to stay awake. She slid it in very gently and turned it on. It beeped and looked at it.

"103.5, it's lowering." She said. They smiled slightly.

A few minutes later he leaned over and puked up all of his juice and small amount of soup he had eaten. They just silently rubbed his arms and back. When he had finished with the dry heaving they gently laid him back down. He dozed off a few minutes later, losing the fight against his closing eyes. They stayed in their positions. They relaxed and talked quietly against pillows.

### 33. Better Not Sicker

They noticed Gibbs shift and groan, on maternal instinct Brenna felt his forehead to see if he was any warmer. It had been a steady 102.3 but it seemed to be going higher. He started shivering more but not violently, curling tighter around himself. He was under a sheet, a blanket, and a comforter. She had his head in her lap, tucked into Jimmy's side and under his arm. Gibbs cracked his unfocused eyes open slightly.

"Hey can you hand me the thermometer." She whispered, he took it off of the dresser on the left.

"Gibbs." He blearily looked over at her.

"I need to check your temperature, dad." She whispered.

He grunted out a mumbled, "hm." Jimmy got up and knelt in front of him.

"I know you're cold and tired but can you open your mouth, really quickly." Gibbs did but very slight, just enough for Jimmy to slide it in. He gently closed his mouth for him and held the thermometer in place; it beeped a few seconds later.

"Okay, just open up real quick." He said and Gibbs did. He closed his mouth for him.

"103.2, it's really gone up."

"Can you help me to the couch." He all but carried him there.

The others are in the living room, and looked up in sympathy at his pallor, sheen of sweat and looking like he would both drop and puke any minute. Tony and Ellie sat with their legs stretched on each side of the couch under the window. Abby and McGee curled together in the armchair next to them. Ducky sat on the other couch, leaning into the couch and feet on the coffee table.

"Oh poor lad, come here son." Ducky said as he put a pillow on his lap.

They laid him down with him grunting slightly. He laid down curled in a blanket, head on Ducky's lap. He pulled the blanket under his chin. Brenna smoothed his blankets down and tucked it under him.

"You need anything else?" Brenna asked sitting on the edge of the couch, by his drawn up knees.

"Juice"

"Okay, don't worry I'll get it." Jimmy did and helped him drink it all, after a few minutes it was gone.

Jimmy and Brenna sat curled in the recliner by ducky and the wall. They watched t.v. and joked, while Gibbs slept. He was so exhausted he didn't even stir. They had placed a bucket by the couch in case he needed to puke. He slept for a few hours, until lunch. He ate a little over half a bowl of soup. They smiled as he set it down and

sat up. He lay, back resting into pillows, on the armrest. His head was resting against a few pillows. He watched t.v. with them, just relaxing and listening to them joking around. He puked violently, a half hour later, leaning over the side. He groaned, holding his stomach he laid back.

"Are you alright?" Brenna asked as she wiped his mouth.

"Yeah" he nodded weakly.

Ducky gave him his afternoon dose of antibiotics and other meds. They want him better as fast as possible. He sipped at a full cup of juice for a few minutes. An hour later he ate a small amount of soup. They were happy to see that his appetite seemed to be slowly coming back.

"I'm starting to think you just don't like my soup." Abby joked with a fake pout.

"Oh yeah like I could hate anything you do." He said chuckling. They laughed at the truth in his joke.

"Very true" McGee said smiling.

Gibbs went back to sleep for a few hours. He woke up for dinner. He had a grilled cheese with his small amount of soup. They thought it would help to get more protein in him. He had gained almost all of his weight. He weighted a very healthy amount. He weight 170lbs. They made sure he didn't lose very much weight. He himself made sure to eat as much as he could with what was put in front of him. He didn't want to lose any weight that would worry them. An hour after dinner he went to bed. They settled him in and went back into the living room. They went to bed a few hours after him. Luckily he didn't puke anything up that night. They took it as a very good sign of him getting better.

End  
file.